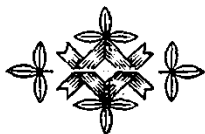


A SCHEME OF ADULT EDUCATION



A. B. MANDE

A SCHEME OF ADULT EDUCATION

(Approved by the Co-operative Department, U. P.)

BY

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WITH A FOREWORD

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FOREWORD.

I have been asked to write a foreword to Mr. Mande's Scheme of Adult Education, and I do so with very great pleasure because I feel that he is most fitted by his academic qualifications and his very long experience as Adult Education Inspector in the Co-operative Department to do this work in the best possible way.

Mr. Mande is a graduate of the Fergusson College, Poona and he holds a Master's Degree in Education from the Teachers' College of the Columbia University, New York. In America he had the privilege of working under Dr. John Dewey, Kilpatrick, Paul Munroe, Bagley Russel and others. In 1924-25 he conducted an experiment in mass literacy in the Central Jail of Nagpur and prepared a Scheme of Mass Education which was published by the Young Men's Indian Association, Nagpur in 1925. This Scheme was very highly spoken of by Sir M. V. Joshi, Kt., the then Home-Member to the Central Provinces Government, Captain N. S. Jatar M. A., Superintendent, Central Jail, Nagpur, Inspector of Schools, Nagpur Circle and many others. Miss A. B. Van Doren of National Christian Council, Nagpur, after reading his scheme wrote about him to Mr. Hazlett,

Principal of the Ewing Christian College, Allahabad, in October last as follows :—

“ He was evidently a prophet born before his time, and a fore-runner of many who are now working along these same lines. I think it would cheer him to find out how much that he advocated 12 years ago is now being accomplished and I believe he would be an ardent worker in this cause.”

From 1929 to 1935 Mr. Mande was in charge of Rural Reconstruction work in the Masodha Co-operative Area in the Fyzabad District. Here he had good opportunity of putting his Scheme of Mass Education to practical test and he has profited much by this experience. His present scheme of Adult Education is undoubtedly very practical and combines cheapness with good results within a period of one year only.

There are some people who advocate such a Scheme of Adult Education as would enable an adult to learn reading within six weeks. I am afraid that an adult who acquires a little knowledge of the Hindi alphabets within six weeks will very likely forget it within the same period and thus the literacy will not be stable at all. Mr. Mande's scheme does not promise to perform any miracle of turning an illiterate person into a literate one within six weeks, but it aims at making him a better citizen with permanent knowledge of

reading, writing, arithmetic and other important subjects within a period of one year only.

In a country where more than 90 per cent. of the people are illiterate, the importance of Adult Education cannot be over-estimated. The Co-operative Department of United Provinces has already accepted Mr. Mande's scheme and is running very successfully a few adult schools on the lines recommended by him. Unfortunately the amount of money provided by the United Provinces Government for adult schools is extremely small and totally inadequate. Therefore in spite of Mr. Mande's scheme being thoroughly practical it could not be introduced in more than 100 villages. Moreover the success of the Scheme also depends upon the extent of co-operation received from the people of the locality. With the present rate of progress many centuries must elapse before all the adults living in rural areas become literate.

If we are anxious to remove illiteracy from India within a period of five years, a comprehensive scheme of opening adult schools in every village should be immediately drawn up by the Provincial Governments in consultation with Provincial Legislatures. With the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy in India the entire responsibility of advancing education and diffusing the knowledge amongst the masses has now fallen upon the Ministers who are responsible to the Legislature. It is because I am fully convinced that Mr. Mande's

Scheme is thoroughly practical and at the same time it is very cheap that I very strongly commend it to the Provincial Governments, members of Provincial Legislatures, and all those who are interested in the problem of Adult Education in India.

DARAGANJ, ALLAHABAD :
5th November, 1937.

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PREFACE.

In October 1925, I had published a book entitled "A Scheme of Mass Education", in which I had incorporated the results of an experiment in adult literacy, which I had conducted in that year for six months in the Central Jail, Nagpur. The advocacy of breaking a new line in the spread of literacy and general information as a direct educational approach to the citizens to give us immediate results in the social regeneration of the country, though well received in the press, was still a cry in the wilderness. During the twelve years that have now elapsed, this advocacy has been gathering force and many a worker is in the field to promote education and literacy amongst the adults. Efforts of Mr. Bhagwat of Poona, those of Mr. McKee in Mogha; of Sir Daniel in Telgu letters; and lastly those of Dr. Frank Luback, need special mention. The march of political, social and economic events have been adding pointedness to the force of this advocacy. In particular, the continuous failure of good harvests and the precipitous fall in prices, have all of a sudden, drawn attention of the thinking public to the problem of Rural Reconstruction and to the search of the fundamental causes for the deterioration of the rural population. Several measures of relief and development are thought of and it is certain, that some would be given effect to. Along with these

it is pleaded that there should be a nation-wide drive -- a kind of mass movement—against illiteracy and ignorance of the adult population, in order to ensure the continuity of the moral and material gains accruing from the contemplated measures of relief and development.

As an humble servant of the people and one who has been persistently working in the field of adult education for the last thirteen years, I place this book before the general public for what it is worth. The aims, the procedure and the methods of teaching advocated in the book are accepted by the Co-operative Department, United Provinces; I have at the same time to note that in the matter of opinions expressed in the book, they are mine and not necessarily shared by the department I am working in.

Lastly it is my pleasant duty to thank Mr. Visbnu Sahay, I. C. S. Registrar, Co-operative Societies, United Provinces; Rai Bahadur Pandit Radhe Lal Chaturvedi, Deputy Registrar, Co-operative Societies and Mr. Banwari Lal Agarwala, M. A., Assistant Registrar Co-operative Societies, Allahabad for their guidance and help in the preparation of the scheme.

FATEHPUR, }
10th October, 1937. }

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

	Page.
Foreword by Professor Daya Shankar Dubey, M. A., LL. B.	
Preface	1
1. Changes in the Social Order	1
Administration under the Panchayat System of Secular education, culture, Vocational Training, dawn of industrial revolution; introduction of faster means of transportation; contact with Western Civilization; inception of representative democratic institutions; necessity of a system of education suited to the changed conditions.	
2. The Primary Education	15
Unsuitability of the Primary system of education for rural areas—reasons—suggested plan of a lower primary school and night school for every village The Vernacular Middle School, for every group of a Rural Development Organisor—Anglo-Vernacular High School for every circle of the Rural Development Inspector.	
3. The Village Library	27
Present possibility—proposal of a library set of the village library—Primary school—the centre of a circulating library.	
4. Adult Education in India	31
History of night schools—opinions of educational authorities on their failure—causes of their failure analysed—Adult education as understood in other countries—standard of education for adult schools—methods of instruction.	

	Page.
5. The Adult Education Scheme	45
Aims—curriculum—Education for worthy home-membership—economic efficiency—recreation—courses of study—books prescribed.	
6. Methods of Imparting Literacy to Adults ...	53
Charts of the Nagpur Central Jail experiment of 1925. Their psychological basis—The Shantipur Literacy Plan and reasons for change—The psychological principles of the process of reading discussed—speed of reading—methods of creating interest in reading.	
7. Teaching of writing to Adults	81
8. Teaching of Arithmetic to Adults	83
9. Teaching of Geography, History, Epics and Civics in Adult Schools.	89
10. Miscellaneous Suggestions	95
Organisation and management of the adult schools—age of scholars—number of scholars for an adult school—fees—hours of instruction—starting of an adult school—Time-table—classwork—extra curriculum activities—School registers—School-house—Selection of a teacher—Training of teachers—Inspection—Agencies fitted to run the adult schools—Expenses of running an adult school.	
Appendices ....	...
(a) Charts—an introduction	113
(b) The Nagpur Literacy Plan	119
(c) The Shantipur Literacy Plan	120
(d) The Matra Charts	127
(e) The Milavat Charts	134

CHAPTER I.

CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL ORDER.

Any scheme of mass education to be really successful and instrumental in the uplift of the society must take into account the social environment, structure and traditions of the society and be based on an intelligent appreciation of the social needs. For "School" in the real sense can only be conceived as a "Social institution" for the benefit of the society. In India, the social order of things is changing, though it has not completely changed. From social, economic and political points of view we are in a state of transition and are still groping in the dark to discover a system of education well adapted to the tradition and genius of our people. The ancient régime had made provision for facilities of education through that wonderful institution of village communities that go by the name of Panchayat in India. With regard to autonomy and self-sufficiency of Indian villages prior to the advent of British rule and to the introduction of the factory system, it must be remembered that India was pre-eminently a land of villages and the smooth working of the Village organization has evoked well-merited admiration from competent persons like Sir Thomas Monroe, Sir Charles Metcalfe and Mount Stuart Elphinstone. These men had seen with their own eyes how efficiently the system had

worked and how conducive it was to the well-being and the prosperity of our rural population at that time. Their admiration is tinged with a peculiar pathos inasmuch as some of these very persons were unconsciously instrumental in its destruction though later on they sought to revive it. The zest for centralisation, necessitated to some extent by the exigencies of early days of the British administration, was largely responsible for its decline. The Panchayat administered to all the needs of the village community—social, economic and educational.

Education under the Panchayat System.

It is not necessary to go into the details of the history of education and the educational institutions in the pre-British period. I will only try to enumerate some of their outstanding features and types :—

1. Centres for classical learning both in Sanskrit and Persian existed at various places which attained fame on that account. There were schools for Grammar, Logic and the Six Darshans. These schools and colleges were not controlled by any Educational Department and were receiving only patronage and recognition from the State. These were open to those who desired learning for its own sake and mostly people belonging to the higher castes and station in life flocked there to get the benefit of these institutions. There was no uniformity in the standard of their teaching and in quality of instruction they differed according to the capacity of

the instructors. Such centres existed at Benares, Nawadwip, Deoband, Lucknow and Delhi.

2. In the second type of schools come the Pathshalas and Maktabas which were associated with temples and mosques and which in addition to general education imparted specific instruction to prospective Purohits and Mullahs for carrying on religious rites in their respective communities.

3. There was a network of a third type of schools which had much to do with mass education. These were largely secular in character and according to the order of the day were not financed by the State. As such they may properly be called Panchayat Schools. Here we are directly interested in the organisation and character of instruction imparted in these schools.

Generally the Landlord or the Mahajan of the village used to invite a teacher to educate his children. The teacher was given a house and means of subsistence by the patron of the school. In these schools the children of the village were admitted on the payment of fees in kind. Schools were held in the verandahs of the zamindar's house or under a banyan tree. The course of instruction consisted in the teaching of mechanics of reading and writing, a little arithmetic and account-keeping. Generally children of land-owning and mercantile communities took benefit of this type of education. In villages where no big Zamindars or Mahajans existed, people co-operated in inviting some

teacher from outside and contributed in kind for his maintenance in the village. Schools of this type were very common. Enquiries conducted by the Bengal and United Provinces Governments from 1833 to 1837 record the fact that almost every village had a secular school and authorities on subject emphatically assert that there was more incidence of literacy amongst the people in those days than it is to-day (*vide* W. Adam's Report of 1838 on Indigeneous Schools). Girls were not prohibited from attending the schools though it cannot be claimed that a very large number of them took benefit. It is possible that girls belonging to higher classes got literacy in these schools. The Guru Ji in United Provinces, Guru Mahashaya in Bengal and Tatyá Panto Ji in the Deccan was a common cultured personality almost in every village.

The following important features of these Panchayat Schools may be noted :—

1. These schools were not financed by the State. For management and discipline of the school the Panchayat or the Patron of the school was responsible. The schoolmaster was controlled locally and if he failed to give satisfaction to those whose children he was called upon to instruct, was asked to go and another invited in his place.

2. People wanted education for their children according to the needs of the times and they contributed for the maintenance of the schools in kind according to

the fashion of the day. With the introduction of English education things changed. The teaching of English assumed central importance. The village schools filled the rôle of feeders to the secondary English schools and even in their case teaching became standardised and was controlled from the centre. The schools had to conform to certain definite syllabus and teaching to entitle them the recognition and aid of the Government and to make their products eligible for public employment. For similar lack of patronage indigenous institutions languished. Their education from the worldly point of view was of no consequence. These institutions disappeared from the scene gradually but steadily, though even now some lingering traces are visible here and there in the country.

In place of village secular schools started spontaneously to fulfil the need felt by parents for elementary education of their children and controlled by the "elders" of the village we have to-day a State system of Primary Schools originally started as mere feeders to the Secondary Schools, extended for the benefit of the village children which on all hands has been declared to be ill-suited to the socio-economic conditions of the village people.

In the days gone by or the ancient régime there was ample provision for cultural and spiritual education of the masses and it was imparted in a manner which relieved the dull monotony of the cultivator's work-a-

day life. This was done through Bhajans, Kirtans, Kathas and occasional folk dances. Now the joy has really passed off the village. The Brahmin or Purohit attended to the spiritual side of the villagers and inasmuch as all the socio-economic activities of the village people were associated with their religious life, the Purohit at one time really played a very important part in the rôle of village affairs. Very often he had a little knowledge of Ayurved and used to collect from the vicinity some herbs and through their combination administered medicines for elementary diseases to the village folk. On the new moon, full moon and Ekadashi days he used to recite Kathas and entertain the village mind. In particular he well knew his art, viz., the reading of the almanac and thus appraised the village people of days of the month and reminded them of going through some of the salutary observances connected with these days. For example, in the days of Diwali and Holi he used to remind them of plastering the walls and cleaning the houses. On the days following lunar and solar eclipses again houses had to be washed and plastered. Deothan Ekadashi marked out another occasion for a drive against dirt and filth exemplified in the beating of Soopa. The sucrose in the sugarcane had to be tasted. It was an occurrence of common experience that when two powerful factions of the village failed to compose their differences amicably and were determined to settle the issue by recourse to lathis,

this village luminary is reported to have warded off the bloodshed by standing bareheaded in the midst of the warring parties. A little reflection on the function of Purohits will reveal to us that he was essentially the village guide of the day and was held in reverence by the village community. The work of this village pastor was reinforced by Kathas of itinerant Kirtankars and Katha-vachaks.

In essence the recitation of the Kathas and the reading of the Ramayan and the Bhagwat by the Purohit of the village was Adult Education. It used to enlighten people on broader subjects and widen their horizon of thought according to the needs of the time. The method that was adopted to carry the torch of knowledge was equally commendable. It was through music and song and through narration of stories. No wonder, it attracted the rustic mind both as a matter of pleasure and duty. It may be argued that this type of education was not effected through reading nor did it promote literacy. The objection is correct. What these teachers aimed at may be summed up in their ideal, *viz.*, to make the village people "Bahu-shrut" (well-informed) and this is exactly what adult education should signify. In place of this agency for the spread of adult education, two newly imported agencies promise to envelope the mass mind, though they have not as yet made much headway into the villages. I mean the Movie and the Press. These have proved to be very powerful educators

in the West and should the process of evolution continue with the speed it is going on, we might expect these agencies and particularly the press to go to the village in a decade.

Panchayat Administration.

Under the Panchayat system besides the farmers, every village had a carpenter, weaver, smith, barber, schoolmaster and Purohit. The vocational education of the prospective artisans and craftsmen was carried through apprenticeship done at home incidentally under the direction of the parent or by attaching them as apprentices to trained artisans.

The elders of the village looked to the administration of the village affairs whether it was a determination of rights in pastures or waterways or dispute between the village people. To the mind of the common villagers the affairs were visible and concrete and final settlement was arrived at after a free discussion amongst the members of the village. Commonsense and usages of the locality were the deciding factors. In place of this form of administration we have now an invisible and centralised system of administration, the complexity of which is beyond the comprehension of the village mind. In the days of yore, private disputes were wont to be settled in accordance with the commonsense law by arbitration of the council of elders which possessed an intimate knowledge of persons and locality, when parties pleaded their own case. But to-day we have a

hierarchy of courts administering multitudinous laws. The parties are at the mercy of lawyers and disputes are judged by a far-off court on the basis of the evidence produced by actual or hired witnesses. Instead of convention regulating the use of pastures and forests, we get to-day statutory enactments coming from councils and assemblies not easily understood by the common man. In place of the locally financed and managed village school we have to-day this institution controlled by invisible authorities through oft-changing deputies and subdeputies. The Government has instituted a large number of nation-building departments the organization and functions of which the common man fails properly to understand. Let us look at the ways in which service to the cultivator is rendered and the perplexity and bewilderment which ensues in the village mind as a result of it. One officer goes to inspect the school, another to vaccinate, a third to popularise the agricultural seeds and improved implements, fourth to lecture on cattle diseases, the fifth to look after the construction of manure pits and soakage pits, the sixth to inoculate people against epidemic diseases, the seventh to inspect the accounts of a Cooperative Credit Society and the number can be multiplied as the departments and the activities increase. The mind of the villager is simply confused at the multitude of the officers coming and going and minding their own business. Under such a system the old personal

humanising touch between the common man and authorities no longer obtains. He understands neither the methods nor the problems of administration.

In the Industrial World likewise a revolution has dawned. The system of hereditary vocations, apprenticeship and cottage industry has been replaced by highly organised industrial system with its requirements of specialised education and training in the varied and differentiated skills, which make it impossible for the craftsman and the cottage industrialist to hold his own against the giant factories. This has given rise to strife between capital and labour, between the employer and the employee and creating innumerable social and economic problems. Here again the humanising personal touch has disappeared. Man is only a part of the machine. His master is some joint-stock company with its head office located in some remote part of the world, he knows not where. From the points of labour the rhythm of work, the ease and harmony with which work was going on, no longer obtains. The labourer has to keep pace with the machine and often in an uncongenial atmosphere.

The Industrial revolution has adversely affected the economic condition of cultivator. The cottage industries were mostly connected with agriculture such as spinning and weaving, of raw cotton produced on the cultivator's field, weaving of blankets from the raw wool which was locally had by shearing a flock of sheep maintained by

the Gadaria (shepherd). The maintenance of sheep in the village helped in fertilising the soil. The same was the case with the castor-oil which was burnt in the houses. Now the cultivator has to purchase cloth, blankets and kerosine oil from a town market. It is estimated that on these articles at least Rs. 300 per year are being spent by ordinary cultivators living in a small hamlet of 30 families. Under the village economy of yore it was only a question of barter between the cultivator and the weaver or the Gadaria and money spent on these articles stayed in the village. Under the national or international economy to-day this amount is irrevocably lost from year to year to the inhabitants of the particular hamlets. Exchange of foodstuffs earned after hard labour for tinsellic goods with the finish of a factory, accounts largely for the poverty on the countryside.

The introduction of the means of communication and transportation has led to phenomenal mobility of labour, loss of social control and the breaking down the barriers of caste-system. This in its turn is yielding a plentiful crop of social problems, the solution of which has been urgently demanding attention of all those who are interested in reconstruction of society. Facilities of fast transportation and the prospect of better careers in the towns and cities have weaned away from the village, persons of high intelligence and leadership. Only the cripple, the dullard and the lifeless are left behind

and in the absence of the proper social control, persons with no education but the innate spirit of the daring are only left for vice and to prey upon the ignorant and the helpless.

If the village of to-day reveals a gloomy aspect four factors are responsible: The first is the disappearance of the influence of the Purohit and itinerant Kathakars, the second is the absence of youths who are intelligent and capable of village leadership but are now being drafted away to the towns, the third is the absence of the social control and the influence of the Panchayat and the last is the liberty of speech and action enjoyed by the freelances of village under the reign of law.

It shall be the principal business of the Adult School or the reading club or the music club in the village to dispel this gloom, to harness the promising young men of the village to better and nobler purposes of life, to revive the old cheer and mirth in the village and to fill in the gap caused by the disappearance of the Kathakar and to rehabilitate the influence of the Panchayat.

The cultivator of the Indian village is no more living in the small republic of old days—self-sufficient and self-content. The barter system amongst the villagers for needs of life under the old village economy had a sudden jump from the village economy into international economy. The intermediate steps of Town and National economy which were the common features in the evolution of the economy of the States of Europe were

omitted in this precipitous leap. The Indian cultivator is more isolated. He is in a complex web of life, joined to millions like himself and unlike to him both for good and evil. This holds good whether it be the question of his economic and political well-being. In the old days, the problems were simple and direct which his mind could comprehend rightly. If there were forces which were beyond his comprehension such as famine, invasion or pestilence he simply unburdened his mind by attributing these to the wrath of Providence. He is no more isolated as he used to be. The horizon of his mind has to be widened. Literacy which is the vehicle of ideas has to be given to him to enable him to make adequate adjustment in the world of to-day. In a word the salvation of the rural millions lies in the movement of Adult Education which the State has to take up as a State policy to be pushed on vigorously.

The contact with the western civilization accompanied by several other social and economic forces has created an upheaval in the society and has given rise to a longing for self-expression and self-realisation in the individual.

But above all the inception of representative democratic institutions and the concomitant grant of franchise to a large number of rural and urban population badly demand that the voter should be prepared to intelligently exercise his newly obtained civic right for the essence of democracy lies in the enlightened participation by the members of a social group in all

its varied activities. It is interesting to note in this connection the correlation of Franchise and Education as exhibited by the history of England. The first big grant to education from the Exchequer was given in 1833, just a year after the passing of the First Reform Bill in 1832. The Second Reform Bill was followed by the Compulsory Education Act of 1870. The Fisher Bill of 1918 preceded the introduction of extension in franchise by a few months. The cry of 1870 "WE HAVE TO EDUCATE OUR MASTERS" strikes the keynote why as to franchise and education go hand in hand.

Our society is thus passing away from a relatively static condition and is fast becoming dynamic. This fact has not been without its effect on our social needs and problems and if we are to readjust ourselves to these changing conditions, we must prepare our people to play their part well and with efficiency. The system of education must be reconstructed in the light of our needs and problems and we must call to our aid efficient devices for imparting instruction. We must take into account how best we can do this task and attain the maximum of results with the minimum of expenditure of time and money. The Royal Commission on Agriculture has suggested a solution and it is "*a determined effort to spread Adult Education.*"

CHAPTER II.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

In a book on adult education, any discussion on primary education may, at the outset, appear beside the point. I have, however, ventured to write this chapter for the following reasons:—

(1) A system of primary education, more suited to the socio-economic condition of the agriculturist will automatically solve many of the problems of adult education.

(2) Should some of the suggestions made in this chapter find acceptance in remodelling the State system of primary education on the rural side it will favourably re-act on its policy in respect of adult education which is the perennial necessity of an agricultural country like India.

(3) As a result of combining of the duties of primary education of the lower grade and adult education in the village guide as advocated herein, the problem of adult education will for all times be satisfactorily solved, along with other problems connected with rural reconstruction.

The present system of Primary Education in the rural areas is really unsuited to the economic conditions

of the cultivators and their requirements. The following are some of the glaring defects of that system :—

1. Originally the present primary schools were started as mere feeders to the secondary schools. The curriculum of these schools was drawn with an eye to prepare the scholars to take up studies in the newly started English schools and even to-day that spirit pervades in our thinking of the primary schools of the rural areas. They are not even to-day recognised as institutions for preparing children of villages for the life of a citizen and an agriculturist.

2. In consequence of the reasons stated above the curriculum of the primary schools is overladen with subjects which have practically very little to do with village life and its requirements. There is too much of the cramming in grammar and geography. These schools in a word are a training ground in intelligence for advanced intelligent studies in the English schools.

3. The very fact that we are fighting shy to impose compulsion in primary education in the rural areas on account of foreseen opposition from parents shows that the present system of primary education is not popular with the village people.

4. The cultivators do not appreciate the benefits of the education of the primary schools inasmuch as the curriculum of the schools is divorced from the actualities of their lives and in some cases they have observed that their children are weaned out from the legitimate

vocations of their forefathers and become neither salary-earning Babus nor good agriculturists.

As a result of the failure to keep proper perspective regarding the function of education as a preparation for life and to be more specific in this case to regard education in the rural areas by far and large as education of the prospective citizens and agriculturists, we begin education at 6 and end it at the age of 12. At such a tender age the child neither understands nor appreciates the abstract notions and the values of life. Their education therefore has to be confined to the three R's and some gymnastics in grammar and geography. The abstract notions of civics which should be the main subject in the education of a citizen has simply to be ignored since children at this age cannot understand them and much less appreciate them.

Considering from the point of educational finance, the present system involves enormous waste of money and energy. I shall quote a passage from the address delivered by Sir George Anderson, Education Commissioner with the Government of India at the All-India Education Conference in 1933 :

“ Take for example the position of the primary education. During the last 10 years the enrolment has risen by leaps and bounds and this indicates at any rate that even the poorest in the land are beginning to realise the benefits of education ; but when we review the results of all this expenditure of time and money in the

terms of literacy we cannot but feel acute disappointment. In some provinces indeed very little headway is being made against the forces of illiteracy. Statistics tell the distressing tale that out of every hundred pupils enrolled in class I only 21 on an average reach class IV (when literacy should be achieved) three years later."

This means that money and energy spent on the education of 79 per cent. of pupils is merely wasted, inasmuch as they drop out without acquiring minimum of literacy. To add to this it has to be noted that separate figure for the urban and rural scholars studying in the primary schools are not available. It is more likely that by far the majority of the pupils who reach class IV come from the urban areas.

Lastly, out of the insignificant number of pupils who reach the fourth class of the primary schools some 75 per cent. pass and go out into the world as certified literates and yet the sad tale follows. Within a period of five years they relapse into illiteracy. This then is in short our achievement in an attempt to spread education in the rural areas. Discontent and dissatisfaction with the present system of primary education particularly in the rural areas is widespread both from the point of results so far achieved and the money spent in achieving them. It is high time that the system must undergo a kind of reorganisation. In formulating the new system we have to bear in mind the following important points :—

(1) The children of the agriculturists above the age of 10 often become wage-earners inasmuch as they begin to tend to cattle or to attend to some agricultural operations carried on by their parents. Economically the agriculturist on the countryside is not rich enough to keep his children in school longer.

(2) The new system of education to be really useful must take into consideration the socio-economic conditions of the people, for whose benefit it is being devised.

(3) From the point of education for citizenship and for training in the vocation of agriculture, the adolescent age is more suited, that is the period between the ages of 12 and 16. This education should begin at 12 and not before.

I have therefore to suggest that education should be made compulsory up to 16 and that the school plan should be so arranged that a rural child aspiring for a higher station in life as well as the vast majority of these children who are destined to be agriculturists, might be accommodated under the plan for their differing needs.

Our present system of education is unitary. One type of school is a feeder school for the one that is above. It is something like a ladder from the primary stage leading up to the University. Side by side with this, we have got another unitary system

leading from the Primary stage up to the Vernacular Middle. Adjustment in solitary instances are allowed by starting of special classes.

In the school plan which I am inclined to suggest bifurcation begins at the age of 10. Parents who positively would want or for economic reasons desire their children to be cultivators might enlist their children in a night school which would be located in their own village and thus enable them to get assistance of their children above ten in agricultural operations during day time. Those who have hopes of sending their children to the Vernacular Middle or to Vernacular High Schools can enlist their children in schools.

Those children who, after finishing the Primary Schools, fail to join Vernacular Middle School would perforce, under the law of compulsory education, have to join the night school in their own village till they attain the age of 16. It would be seen that the school plan is flexible enough and in no way debars the prospects of a promising rural child aspiring for a higher station in life.

It would be seen that I am suggesting three types of schools :—

- (1) The Lower Primary School,
- (2) The Vernacular School Middle and
- (3) The Vernacular High School.

It is desirable that I should clarify my ideas regarding the function and utility of each type.

(1) *The Lower Primary School.*—Every village association with a membership of one hundred or more families should be encouraged to have a school of this type. It would be run for three hours in the morning for all boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 9 by the village guide, who would be a local Vernacular Middle passed man. This very guide would run an adult school for two hours in the evening of all boys between the ages of 10 and 16.

As the name of the school suggests, instruction up to the second standard only would be imparted while the scholars under instruction in this type of school would be between the ages of 6 and 9. This period in the life of the child is an age of habit formation. It has to serve the biological purpose, *viz.*, the child should grow physically in strength and mentally in powers of observation by handling concrete things. More attention would be given to organised games, songs and scout drills to make children smart, alert and happy. Sanitary habits of children in particular would be attended to. Children would be given more acquaintance with their surroundings including plant and animal life. The regular school studies, *viz.*, reading, writing and arithmetic would not be much neglected. It has to be observed that reading and writing of the Nagri Script is really so easy, that knowledge in these arts can be playfully

picked up at any stage in life, while the skill in calculation comes in with practical experience and with advancing age, though not the technique of arithmetic.

(2) *The Vernacular Middle School.*—All boys above the age of 9 will be called upon to join the Vernacular Middle School which will be at a distance of 3 miles at the longest from their village and no boy will be allowed to leave the school unless he passes the primary stage (Standard IV). Boys who leave the school after passing the primary stage will perforce have to join the night school which will meet in their own village till they attain the age of 16.

It may be argued that since these lower primary schools would be one-teacher schools, they would be open to the charge of being called "inefficient schools". Answer to this question is simple. We have already a large number of such inefficient one-teacher schools and they too have been serving some useful purpose. Under compulsion and with slightly changed notions regarding the function of the lower primary school, things would change. The village guide will only have to be trained in the art of teaching.

The Night School.

The village guide would run a night school for four days in a week in the village for the benefit of all boys between the ages of 10 and 16 who would mostly be literate. On two days of the week he will arrange

varied programme for adult or general education of the people of the village. This may include Ramayan singing, Katha, magic lantern lectures, entertaining the village folk with gramophonic records or reading of the extracts from newspapers and magazines.

The lower primary school in the village will largely evince the spirit of the indigenous secular schools under the old Panchayat system and the night school will attempt to rise up to the old ideal of making the village people "Bahushrut" under that system while the village guide will be an improved edition of the Purohit. This very guide will also work as a local secretary of the Village Credit Society for account-keeping. Such a system will be in keeping with the traditions of the people. If and when our rural reconstruction village associations would be accorded statutory sanction, with annual Government contributions to these from land revenue to the extent of stipulated per cent. of revenue paid by its member to Government, with powers to levy Fasli Chanda in kind to the extent of five seers per *fasal* from each household for common good fund and with the margin of profit for the credit work carried on by the association amongst its members, the village associations will not only gain in reality of power but their finances will also be on a sound footing. The salary of the village guide which might range between Rs. 7 and Rs. 12 can easily be paid out of the income of these associations. Any

number of such schools may be increased without taxing the provincial revenue appreciably.

It has to be observed that an attempt to run such primary and adult schools in every society was made with a large measure of success when I was in charge of the Masodha Rural Reconstruction Experiment (District Fyzabad) conducted by the Co-operative Department from 1929 to 1935.

There should be no ground for any apprehension regarding the attendance at the night school under compulsion. Some of the difficulties which will have to be faced are :--

(1) Scholars belonging to various standards of attainments would be attending the night school run by one teacher. This difficulty can be got over by the introduction of the Dalton Plan and under the assignment system of that plan.

(2) Another difficulty which will have to be faced is that of drawing of curriculum for night schools. The minimum attendance of the scholars at these night schools should be at least 100 days. The night schools will serve three purposes :—

(a) It will check relapse into illiteracy of scholars on whose education the State had spent so much money.

(b) It will widen the horizon of the scholar.

(c) The scholar will be getting instruction in the night school of a more practical aspect, directly

touching his life as an agriculturist and citizen of the State.

As I have said above, the pupils of the night school (boys between the ages of 10 and 16) would be free to attend to the tending of cattle and the agricultural operations during day time. They would be called upon to attend the night school for two hours only in evening for 100 days in a year.

It would be seen that under such a plan the responsibility of imparting education of the lower grade to boys and girls up to the age of 9 as well as for adult education is thrown on the self-supporting autonomous Panchayats and more State help would be available for vernacular education of a higher type.

Vernacular Middle Schools (Standard III to Standard VI) in which instruction in elementary agriculture and industry would be compulsory subjects, can be started for the benefit of 20 Rural Reconstruction Associations for an area under a Rural Development organiser. Relieved of the responsibility of maintaining a very large number of one or two teachers in inefficient primary schools, these Vernacular Middle Schools can be made adequately staffed and housed.

(3) *The Vernacular High School.*—In the same manner, after each circle in charge of a Rural Development Inspector, a Vernacular High School can be started in which advanced instruction in agriculture and industry

of the area would be given. In standard of instruction these Vernacular High Schools would be on par with our English High Schools and the scholars of these schools would be eligible to pass Matriculation Examination compartmentally in all subjects except English. Should some of the students later on take up a special course in English and pass the Matriculation Examination in that subject compartmentally there should be no bar in their way to join the University.

This however presupposes that the Rural Development work is well planned and the district is divided into unions boards for purposes of carrying on the activities of the nation-building departments.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY.

In these days there is much talk about village libraries. It will be conceded that the suggestion is well-meaning. But let us look at it more closely. We may imagine the number and the variety of the books available for a village library if the suggestion is to be carried out. Ramayan by Tulsidas, books on Alha, a few leaflets on Chautals and at the most half a dozen story books which may be called decent is all that can be stocked on the shelf of a village library. A suitable literature for village use is not available and would not be forthcoming so long as literacy is not sufficiently widespread and until there is a demand for such literature. The absence of such a literature reacts adversely upon those who become literate. For the disuse in which their literacy falls results in its being completely wiped out. Recently the Co-operative departments of the Punjab, United Provinces and Bihar have started some "Weeklies" for the benefit of the village folk and are running them at a loss, since either the contents or the style or the language of these weeklies is not suited for the village people. However this aspect of the problem, which is indispensable from the point of retention of literacy as well as diffusion of useful information, has to be tackled.

In 1933 I had prepared a scheme in collaboration with my colleague the late Pandit Vidya Bhasker Shukla for submission to the Government. The scheme was approved and a part of the money was sanctioned out of the year's funds at the disposal of the Co-operative Department for printing my five books. The whole scheme could not be carried out for want of funds subsequently.

The idea was to prepare a series of books for the village libraries. The salient points of the series of books were to be as follows :—

1. The book should not be very lengthy and should be complete by itself. It should be lengthy enough for a fast reader to go through it at one sitting. On an average the book should cover something like 60 pages.

2. The type of the book should be bold and spacing decent.

3. The language should be so popular that a man in the street can understand it. It should not be highly Sanskritised or Persianised.

4. It should contain instructive illustrations.

5. Books of the following varieties were contemplated :—

(a) Biographical sketches	75
(b) Descriptions of places of pilgrimage ...	30
(c) Modern inventions and their working such as the radio, telegraphy, railways, etc.	40

(d) Epic stories	50
(e) Books on civics, agriculture, health and other subjects of useful information for cultivators	40
(f) Simple and harmless but sonorous songs and dialogues on village uplift in particular	25
(g) Humorous stories, anecdotes, dramas and light but innocent literature ...	100
(h) Books specially written for women ...	40
Total ...	400

It was intended that a series of 400 books classified as above should be got written ; that an editorial board consisting of one representative each from the education, agriculture, health, co-operative and veterinary departments should be asked to work on this board. Pandit Vidya Bhasker Shukla, a writer of books for children and proprietor of a Press at Allahabad, had consented to work as editor-in-chief and his literary friends had consented to carry out the scheme. It was calculated that the whole set of 400 books could be made available for Rs. 60 only if one thousand subscribers would come forward with an assurance to purchase a set. The problem was not pursued for various reasons. However, there would be no difficulty in finding out one thousand subscribers. It would be

remembered that this set was to be written also with a view to make a good library set for keeping it in the Middle and Anglo-Vernacular Middle Schools which have their library funds and which also get special grants for libraries from the Government and District Boards. In fact if the Government adopts a policy of making every primary school a library centre from which books will be issued to the literate men and women within the school area, we shall be able to easily get one thousand subscribers in the Province. It will only mean spending of the Provincial grant for libraries amounting to Rs. 60,000. The grant to the various school libraries may take the shape of presenting a set of such books each year.

In passing, it may be noted that the writing and printing of these books would take three years. If the Government follows the policy of presenting a set of 125—150 books a year, the problem would be easily solved. I have also elsewhere suggested that a "Weekly" should be started under the Rural Reconstruction Centre, the style and the get-up of this "Weekly" should be attractive.

CHAPTER V.

ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA.

It was felt that an extension of current system of primary education would remove the ignorance and illiteracy of the adult populace and therefore Night Schools began to be established to re-inforce the efforts of the Government in this direction. Historically these schools owe their origin in India to the policy of the Madras Government which wanted to encourage education amongst the "Panchamas"—the depressed classes of that province. The idea of imparting literacy to the adult population was catching and subsequently such schools were extended to the industrial towns to provide facilities of education to day-labourers but in the very nature of things the system of Night Schools made no appeal to the people of rural areas. In the Industrial towns where such schools exist they impart education of a primary grade and it is true that ambitious labourers benefit by these schools. On the whole, however, the system has never been a success. The Quinquennial Review of Education for 1897-98 to 1901-2 contains the following remarks of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay :—

"The history of these schools is one of decline in every respect: in number of schools, in attendance

and in expenditure. Speaking generally there is no chance that they will ever prosper. Education in this country at least is not valued for its own sake and the material advantages to be derived from the possession of it are not sufficient to attract men or boys who are tired with the day's work. It is also to be remembered that the masters are themselves tired out with the day's teaching to which perhaps postal work has been added."

Similarly the Review for 1912 quotes Rai Saheb Bhagwati Sahai, Additional Inspector of Schools, Bengal, thus :

"So long as the labourer for whom this class of schools is intended can earn a decent living without education, there will not be any real demand for such schools and a night school in the sense of continuation school is out of question so long as education is not regarded as an end in itself."

The sum and substance of these complaints is that the benefits of education are not realised in this country. This is tantamount to saying that the value of an electric fan is not realised by those who live in a tropical country or the value of a good furcoat is not realised by the denizens of the *Tundras*. It only means that these very useful and essential commodities of comfort are either relatively prohibitive or not worth the sacrifice. It will be seen that in their analysis of the failure of the night schools these educationists trace the cause either to

mentality of the adults or to the exhaustion of the teacher. To my mind the real causes for failure are elsewhere. The purpose or function of an adult school in a general scheme of education, its organisation, the content or type of instruction fit for imparting in such a school and the methods of instruction, these and allied things were not viewed in their proper perspective.

The fact is that the night school started for the education of adults was nothing but a duplication of a Primary school with the only difference that while the hours of instruction for the Primary schools were during the day time, the adults were taught at night. The long drawn-out course of four years was there with the same insipid and uninformatinal text-books of the Primary schools—the methods dull and monotonous in the extreme. In purpose, organisation, contents and method of teaching it was the same as obtained in the Primary schools. The pioneers of the night schools had failed to take into recognition the fact that they were dealing with adults from whom the docility of mind had gone, whose habits of thinking and living were more firmly fixed, whose tastes and needs differed from those of children. The failure was rather in the proper method of approach to the problem of Adult Education. If there was a decline in the number of night schools and attendance it was only a confession that padagogue's rod which worked so effectively upon a docile child failed in its mission when dealing with the adult.

In recent years extension in franchise, factory legislation, formation of labour unions, the spread of co-operative movement and the newly-born aspirations of the submerged classes have given a fresh impetus to the night school movement. In Bombay, night schools for adults have been started with the aid of a princely donation from the late Sir Vithal Das D. Thakersay, while in the Punjab and the United Provinces Co-operative Departments have already entered the field to promote adult education. In the Madras Presidency the Y. M. C. A. centres at Coimbatore and Martandam have been doing very valuable work in this field. In the Punjab a training school for the training of the rural workers has been started by Mr. Mackee. By far and large the Co-operative Departments seem to take the lead. It is the workers of this department whose activities in the rural areas are hampered by the ignorance and the illiteracy of the people and to their efforts favourable response appears to come from the adults as may be seen from the following extracts of the Report of the Co-operative Department of the Punjab :

“Members of Rural Societies have been known at advanced ages to receive the elements of education to enable them to put their signatures on the societies' papers and to take a lively interest in the internal work of their institution.”

But so far these experiments have been only sporadic. What is really wanted is a well concerted and organised

movement for the spread of adult education in the rural area to combat illiteracy and to dispel the appalling ignorance of the masses. In this connection the Royal Commission* on Agriculture, presided over by His Excellency Lord Linlithgow, has set forth vividly some of the advantages which Adult Education will confer upon the State. They are as follows :—

1. That the mental horizon of the cultivator will be much widened.

2. That he will be willing more to adopt Agricultural improvements.

3. That he will be capable of watching over his interests when buying or selling his produce.

4. That when he will realise in his own person the benefits of education, his apathy towards the education of his children will vanish.

5. That being thus convinced of the benefits of education, he may be expected to be willing to tax himself to secure them and thus the financial difficulty in the expansion of Primary Education will be removed.

6. That it will lead to the establishment of the libraries and in this manner the children taught at the schools will not relapse into illiteracy.

* For easy reference an extract on Adult Education from the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India is given in the Appendix.

7. That a development of Adult Education on a large scale would antedate by at least a generation that great advance in literacy so essential to progress in all directions.

And still the programme of Adult Education as State policy has not been taken up by any provincial government in India and the authorities of Education Department seem to be reluctant to handle the problem. Some of them in the light of past experience have even declared that programme of Adult Education is an impracticable proposition.

Before we come to the discussion of the purpose, organization, curriculum and agencies employed to conduct the adult schools and the methods of teaching, let us examine into the causes of the failure of the night schools.

It would be admitted on all hands that any adult will like to have literacy in him provided it comes to him without pains but will not go through an ordeal of immense hardship for what he thinks a petty gain of literacy and which from his point of view as a labourer or a wage-earner on his own field is not likely to change his lot appreciably. He certainly wishes that he were a literate person and he could read Ramayan, books on Alha and Phagua during the spare hours to while away his time. But docility of his mind is gone. In fact his desire for literacy is as keen as that of a research scholar who does not know French and will

not learn French as an additional qualification even though it might help him a bit in his research work. But it is a common experience that he will refrain from making any serious effort to learn if he can do without it. But if literacy and knowledge of French could be had without pains, both would like to have them.

It would again be admitted at all hands that an adult with his mature intelligence can comprehend things much quicker than a child can and provided the subject is interesting to him, can keep up his attention on the subject longer than the child. The failure of the adult schools is due to the following causes :—

1. The method of presentation has been extremely dry, dull and monotonous. Better methods of teaching suitable for adults and attractive to them have to be devised. The methods have perforce to be interesting to keep up the attention of the adult mind which would refuse to yield to any threat or to the flourish of the rod. One of the principle causes of the failure of night schools has been the method of teaching employed by the teachers.

2. It has to be remembered that the curriculum of adult schools was to be the same as that prescribed for the children's schools and to be covered in a period of four years. Obviously this is too much to expect from

an adult. A short course even involving greater labour would be more welcome to the grown-up people.

3. What, after all, was attempted to be given to adults in these night schools? A bare knowledge of three R's and that too in a protracted period of four years. The subject-matter for teaching had no direct relation to his life's activities. It in no way enhanced his efficiency in earning more or in spending his leisure hours better. Some of the lessons in their Readers written primarily for children contained lessons on fairy tales and tales of sparrows and crows which must have appeared to them grotesque and fantastic. From the point of practical utility the knowledge imparted in these night schools was of little value.

4. Agency employed to run the night schools was equally of a doubtful utility. Most of the teachers must have been the Municipal or District Board employees who consented to teach in the night schools since it added to their income. For music and song these teachers probably had an inherent dislike. Exhausted with the day's work and with the normal mentality of a pedagogue, one cannot expect these teachers to enthuse life into the scholars of night schools.

5. The failure of night schools is largely due to the fact that the promoters of those schools had not before them a clear-cut idea about the purpose of an adult school. This was left to the co-operators. The

ideas regarding the function of the adult school as a community-centre for recreational purposes as well as for the regeneration of the village society had not dawned.

For successful running of the adult schools the following factors are essential :—

(i) The methods must be attractive and appealing to the minds of the adult.

(ii) The course of instruction at the adult school must be a short one and should not ordinarily exceed a year.

(iii) The subject-matter for teaching must be of some practical value from the point of view of scholars under instruction. It should give useful information to enhance their efficiency in everyday life.

(iv) The teacher of the night school must be a man full of life, capable of leadership and with a special liking for music and song. Teachers with their *moharrami* (sullen) faces should studiously be ruled out.

(v) The promoters of the schools must have before their mind a clear idea of the meaning and purpose of the adult schools.

In England and other foreign countries where there is a high percentage of literacy amongst people the term "Adult Education" is used to mean extra-mural lectures. The associations and public bodies arrange series of

lectures on social, economic and political theories of the day and on subjects which are the burning topics for the time being. In dealing with these subjects the lecturers throw much of sociological and historical light in the development of these currents of thought. In a word "Adult Education" in these countries means the widening of the horizon of the common man who is already literate, but who has not got time to study comparatively the various theories of great thinkers.

The Co-operative Departments of the Punjab and United Provinces have a midway conception about the function of an "Adult School". To them it is an evening club, a gathering of grown-ups for recreational purposes, a rendezvous where inhabitants of the village, after toilsome labour, meet to exchange thoughts and to discuss matters of everyday importance. The sanctity of the Co-operative Adult School would not be violated by the intrusion of the Huqqa or the smoking-pipe in it. Music and song will relieve the dull monotony while it educates and enlivens the people. Literacy has to be given but it is regarded as a means and not an end of education. The "Adult School" will be a sort of a community centre. The programme will be varied and would include music, song and kathas, narration of stories and experiences, reading of informative extracts from newspapers and magazines and other sundry things as dialogues and dramas.

Standard of Education.

A high standard was aimed at the attainment of literary while other subjects from the standpoint of educating the cultivator and the citizen were ignored. They laid more stress upon the speed of reading and comprehension of difficult passages ; on the working of long sums on vulgar fractions or sums on foreign coins and measurements ; in learning definitions in grammar, geography and dates in history, etc. The difference in the standard of education is the natural outcome of the two points of view from which the standard has to be fixed. The Primary Education is regarded rightly or wrongly as a stepping stone for higher education. Under the present unitary system, Primary school is nothing but a feeder school or a step in the ladder of education beginning with the Primary and ending with the University. From the point of view of educating an adult the thing stands on a different footing. Adult education ought to be self-sufficient and complete in itself. It is not a preparation for higher studies, but a preparation for the life of a cultivator and a citizen. It may therefore naturally be expected that the curriculum and standard of attainment here would be materially different. From our point it is futile to keep a very high standard of literacy as some would have it. The standard would go higher with the passage of time and the willingness with which the people of the rural areas take to literacy. It has to be remembered that if by lowering the standard

a little, we speed up the spread of literacy a great gain will have been achieved. For our part the criterion of the standard would be the "Functional" point in education. Let us for example ponder over one point, *viz.*, how the literacy of a literate man in a village would function in his life under circumstances as they stand to-day. In other words, what use will he make of it in his daily life? He would for example use literacy for reading of Ramayan and Hanuman Chalisa for spiritual gain; he would read books on Alah and Chautal for recreational purposes; he would read such trashy books as Totamaina and Baital Pachisi to while away his time just as we read detective stories. A few of them may read weeklies. To most of them magazines would be out of reach and in the case of the majority of the rest, the language of these magazines would pass over their comprehension. His skill in writing may be called into play probably once in 2 months when writing letters to some distant relation. Writing of petitions and money-orders and reading of receipts of land rent would be occasions quite rare for him though not out of the realm of possibilities. In short, from the "Functional" point of view if he attains the knowledge of reading to the extent of reading Ramayan with facility we should be prepared to call him a literate man.

In the organization of the subject-matter for instruction, as in other matters, the same functional point of view will be our guiding principle. If the cultivator

can keep his own accounts, can calculate the cost of agricultural operations, can comprehend intelligently the account of Mahajans and his dealings with the co-operative societies, his knowledge of arithmetic can be regarded as complete. In Geography if he knows the places of pilgrimage where he or his neighbours often go, the commercial places where his agricultural produce finds a sale and a few capital and industrial places, his knowledge in the subject may be regarded as adequate. He speaks his colloquial in a grammatically correct manner and hence instruction in grammar would be superfluous. But more than anything else, he has to be informed about his civic rights and obligations, sanitation of his village and epidemic diseases to which his village is sometimes subject, something of personal hygiene and a good deal of agricultural improvements. This should form the course of his "General Education".

Method of imparting General Knowledge.

As things stand to-day the cultivators do not suffer so much from the absence of literacy in them as from the narrowness of their outlook, ignorance of the public utilities established by the Government departments for their benefit, absence of better attitude towards the values of life; an apathy and suspicion for a corporate life. If he can co-operate with his neighbour for better production, for combating the disease, if he becomes more of a social being, things would be much brighter than they are to-day. He needs to be informed on many

points. But this information can better be imparted "orally". We have to make him more of a "Bahushrut" or a well-informed man and on the practical side to create in him attitudes and habits to turn to use good things told to him.

CHAPTER V.

THE ADULT EDUCATION SCHEME.

Aims.

1. The Adult Education Scheme aims at imparting of literacy as an essential equipment for a citizen in modern days, but this literacy is regarded only as a means to an end.

2. It aims to give to mass of the village people such knowledge of hygiene, agricultural improvements and civics as would be conducive to their better health, wealth and well-being and would enable them to live a balanced life.

3. It aims to give to the people cultural education with a view to enable them to make the best use of their leisure as well as to participate in the village activities, so that they may find joy in the village-life.

4. It aims at creating in them attitudes and habits for social solidarity and a pride and love for country-life.

5. It aims at inspiring into the hearts of the village people a spirit of piety, godliness and brotherhood, a contentment combined with love for hard work. In other words, it aims at inculcating that indescribable spirit which pervades the "folk school" of Denmark or

its counterpart in India which may be termed as "Satsang" minus its dogma or mysticism.

Curriculum.

From the above it will be seen that the aim which we set before us for adult education is the proper adjustment of the individual to the society and once we define this aim, the problem of making the curriculum becomes more handy. The approach to curriculum-making will also have to be made from a sociological point. For the time being let us set aside the established notions of the curricula with its watertight compartment into subjects such as History, Geography etc. We shall try to approach this from the sociological point of view and though we may not succeed in writing out fresh-text-books to suit our need, this thinking itself and a feeling for departure from the traditional method of approach to curriculum-making would be worthwhile. It will at least give us an insight as to what we are driving at.

The scientific approach to curriculum-making would be to take up a representative group of scholars for whom this type of education is intended and to analyse their group-life into various activities in which the individuals of the group participate. Further, a survey of the needs of such a group may also be taken by projecting the ideal which we want to set before that

particular group. It is then by this analysis of their group-life into its activities and the ideal that intelligent and scientific curriculum can be prepared.

The above point would be further clarified by asking one's self some of the pertinent questions of the following types :—

1. For whom are we prescribing the curriculum ?
2. How much shall we teach them taking into consideration their needs ?
3. What shall we teach them from the standpoint of utility ?
4. With what aim in view ?
5. What methods shall we apply to attain the desired end ?

To take a concrete case, we have for our scholars a group of ordinary cultivators of the United Provinces. The analysis would relate to the land they cultivate, the crops they harvest, their methods of irrigation, such agricultural products as manufacture of *gur*, etc. From the cultural point of view we shall be taking survey of the melas and festivals they partake in. From the social point of view the social structure and customs obtaining in the group regarding marriage ceremonies, etc., would be taken into consideration and this analysis will go on to the minutest details. Such an analysis would reveal to us the failings of that social group and also the methods we have to employ to improve them.

Education of this group would thus resolve itself into :—

(A)—*Education for the Worthy Membership of the Family.*

This will include personal hygiene and sanitary habits at home, desirable relationship with other members of the family, decoration of the house, habits of thrift and preparation of family budget.

(B)—*Education for Economic Efficiency.*

This will include improved methods of cultivation and irrigation that can practically be introduced; the improved processes of manufacturing of agricultural products such as *gur*, the crop diseases, various types of manures, tools and implements, care of the cattle, disposal of the agricultural produce, the revenue system, credit system of the money-lender and of a co-operative society, etc.

(C)—*Education for Social Efficiency.*

This will include two types of relationships with the society :—

(a) His direct or personal relationship as a neighbour or as a member of the village Panchayat; village sanitation, social festivals of the village, membership of a credit society or of co-operative store.

(b) His indirect or impersonal relationship, such as the invisible agencies of administration consisting of his entity as a voter of the District Board, the

Legislative Assembly; and his entity working under the various controlling agencies such as the various departments of the State.

The sort of knowledge conducive to efficiency in sections (a) and (b) is known as Civics. Emphasis should be given upon the rights as well as obligations in the discharge of his relationship to the social group.

(c) In addition to these relationships there are public utilities such as transportation facilities including Railway and Road System, the Postal service, the Medical service, the Serais and Dharamshalas, the canal system, etc. The cultivator has to be informed as to how to make the best use of these public utilities.

(d) There are also some social institutions and problems such as untouchability, caste system, child marriage, position of the women in the society and the like.

(e) Lastly, since the cultivator is living in an age where Industrial Revolution is completing itself, some insight into the processes of manufacture from the raw material to the finished product and the interdependence of man on man may be given with advantage.

(D) — Education for Recreation.

This will include a taste for music and song. What is more important is that these songs should not only be chaste in themselves, but will also lift up their eyes

to higher and nobler purposes of life. The harmony of song will bring about the harmony of affairs at home and at large. The "Adult School" should give more emphasis on this type of education. It has to attain a variety of ends through it. In the first place it is recreation, music and song which will attract them to the congregation. Secondly, it is this type of education which will keep off the prospective victims from falling into the lower habits of drink, etc. It is calculated that catering to this type of education will prevent formation of parties and cliques which eventually lead to frivolous litigation in villages. Lastly, it will create life and mirth into the hearts of people labouring under economic depression. It might as well stir them into activity to better their lot.

Courses of Studies.

The course of studies under the scheme runs for a year and has been for the sake of convenience divided into four stages of three months each. The following text-books and materials have been specially prepared for the benefit of the Adult Schools and can be had from the Manager, Saraswati Sadan, Daraganj, Prayag :

Stage 1.

	<i>Copies.</i>
1. Bhajan Charts for teaching of letters, size 27" x 17"	25
2. Word Charts, size 13" x 8½"...	200

	<i>Copies.</i>
3. Primers	20
4. Reader No. 1 or Pahlī Pothi	20
5. Writing Slips or Exercise Books for writing, for Stage 1	20
<i>Stages 2, 3 and 4.</i>	
1. Hanuman Chalisa	20
2. Tulsikrit Ramayan	5
3. Ramayan in simple prose	5
4. Mahabharat in simple prose	5
5. Puranic Kathayen (Mythological Stories)... ..	5
6. Itihasic Kahanian (Historical Stories)	5
7. Itihasic Kahanian, Part II	5
8. Bharat ke Mashoor Asthan, Part I (Text- book in Geography)	5
9. Zamin Asman Ki Baten, Part II (Text-book in Geography)... ..	5
10. Farmer's Arithmetic, Part I	5
11. Nagrik Shastra, Part I (Primer on Civics)... ..	5
12. Nagrik Shastra, Part II	5
13. Handbook of teachers	1
14. Exercise Books for working out sums in Arithmetic	20
15. Exercise Books for writing	20
16. Attendance Register	1
17. Progress Register of Adults	1

			<i>Copies.</i>
18. Proceedings Book	...	...	1
19. Receipt Book ..	...	...	1
20. Monthly Report Forms	...	...	12

The above articles can be had for Rs. 25 only from the Publishers. In addition to these a blackboard combined with the sliding machine can also be had for Rs. 7 from the same firm.

CHAPTER VI.

IMPARTING OF LITERACY TO ADULTS.

[The Literacy plan and the Psychological basis behind it.]

In appendix I (a) I am giving the charts which I had prepared for imparting literacy to the illiterate adults. These charts were being used prior to 1931. It would be seen that each chart contains a number of sentences and forms a lesson by itself. As far as possible an attempt has been made to give them in story form. It will also be seen that in each sentence one word such as "Bhagat" (भगत) or "Rahat" (राहत) which is the topic of the lesson is placed at random once in each sentence. The object of doing so was to present a sort of "problem" to the adults to pick up this word. Similarly when the word "Rahat" was analysed into its component letters, the letters were also distributed indiscriminately in meaningful words in the "Words Charts". In short, the Sentence Method of Reading was followed. One word was repeated in a number of sentences to engender a "problem attitude" in the scholar. In selecting words for these problems, "matras" were avoided. The reading of words was to come in meaningful sentences and in their proper setting.

These charts were more or less an adaptation of the Marathi Charts which I had prepared for conducting

a controlled experiment in the Central Jail, Nagpur, in the year 1925.

A personal reference would not be out of place here about the development of the literacy plans :

While I was studying at the Teachers' Training College in the Columbia University, New York (from 1921 to 1924), I was more interested in the Psychology of reading and researches conducted on the perception span and eye movement by Dr. Huey. By way of curiosity I tried an experiment on the teaching of Nagri alphabets under this plan to my class fellows who knew neither the scripts nor the languages, of India. On my return in 1924, I wanted to conduct a controlled experiment in which I wanted to control such factors as hours of instruction and the condition of unquestioned illiteracy amongst scholars. This could best be fulfilled in the Jail atmosphere of strict discipline. At the instance of Sir M. V. Joshi, Kt., the then Home Member to the Central Provinces Government, Captain N. C. Jathar, D. S. O., Superintendent of the Nagpur Central Jail, consented to place at my disposal 23 prisoners from whose history-sheets he could give a certificate regarding their illiteracy. These prisoners were to be taught under the literacy plan for one hour only and were not supposed to read during the leisure time. I conducted this experiment for six months and tests were taken by the Inspector of Schools and the Superintendent of the Normal School, Nagpur, from time to time. The

results of this experiment are incorporated in my publication of 1925 entitled "A Scheme of Mass Education."*

In 1929 I was appointed as Adult Education Inspector in the Co-operative Department in United Provinces. Up to 1931 the methods and the literacy Charts in Hindi were introduced on the same lines as those in Marathi. By the end of 1931, however, I had to make some important changes in the literacy charts. These new charts are also based on the same principles of educational psychology.

The incident which actuated me to make a change deserves to be mentioned here. I was camping at Shantipur in Fyzabad District, when Pandit Shitla Prasad, a teacher of the Local Sanskrit Pathshala, introduced to me a man who could read Ramayan with facility but had no previous schooling. Further, this gentleman had the knowledge of reading but could not write. Further enquiries elicited the fact that there were a few individuals in the villages both men and women who had no previous schooling or any regular instruction in the skill of reading given to them but had acquired the skill of reading Ramayan. This was quite a surprise for me and an incentive for deep thinking. "How did knowledge of reading dawn upon them?" "What were the psychological principles behind this phenomenon?" That was the question. Musing over it, I could come

* The publication can be had from Mr. R. T. Deshmukh, Saraswati Press, Nagpur.

to the only conclusion that while these grown up men and women were of tender age and being endowed with the innate high powers of memory and imitation, learnt by heart some Chaupais of Ramayan as they were being sung in the house by their parents or relations. Curiosity led them to find out in the pages of the book the symbols representing the sounds in these Chaupais. This was a sort of a game to them, trying to find out the exact word and correctly locating it. This process of learning is incidental like all original learning. It is learning by "trial and error" or "trial and success" method. There is some charm in this process of learning. In fact like all original learning whether it be the case of a nine-month old baby making its first attempts to stand, often struggling, sometimes failing, sometimes succeeding and involving a good deal of daring or whether it be the case of an Archimedes who jumped into the tub of water and discovered the phenomenon of buoyancy, this process of learning has a resultant joy. It has something to commend itself. The only trouble is that all are not capable of it. However analysing the process in which these boys and girls learnt to read Ramayan, the process was something as follows :—

1. They knew a line by heart such as खुपति राघव राजाराम-वतित पावन सीताराम and in a playful manner moved their finger beneath the line and as they looked at it for the second time more intently, the idea dawned upon their mind that the words such as खुपति, राघव, राजाराम etc.,

were distinct and separate words. With further practice they discerned that the component letters of रघुपति, राघव etc., were not there incidently. The recognition of letters developed in them as "independent entities" just as notions of number dawn upon children.

It may be necessary here to explain the psychological process by which independent notions about number (and for sake of illustration, as here in the case of letters) develop in the minds of children and human beings.

If I make an attempt to teach a two-year old child an idea of number "three" by taking three concrete things as mangoes in my hands and go on teaching that I have three mangoes, one in the right hand, another in the left hand and the third on the table, the child will persist in saying that there is one mango in one hand, that there is another mango in the other and that the third is on the table; but he will not say that they make collectively "three". A year or two later he develops collective ideas of numbers, though nobody has made any regular or studious effort to teach the notions about numbers. The child learnt this incidently. He heard the word "three" talked by his mother in connection with mangoes, chairs, tables and other sundry things and the child came to the conclusion that the word "three" is not an invariable concomitant of any of these concrete things, but is there to denote the number. In the same way the illiterate child as it repeatedly went through a line like "Raghupati

Raghav Rajaram" must be driven to the conclusion that the letter "Ra" (र) repeats itself as the symbol representing the sound. By such or a similar process the independent ideas about the 35 letters of the alphabet must have dawned upon the minds of these men and women who learnt to read Ramayan unguided.

Here it may be mentioned that intelligent boys and girls of the cities of Western countries of Europe and America learn all letters of the alphabet before they reach the age of six. This knowledge of letters is not the result of any special teaching on the part of their mothers, but they get occasions to read the signboards on the streets such as "The Drug Store," "The Cafe," "The Restaurant," "The News Stand," "The Subway," "The Tram Car," "The Bus Stand," etc.

This method as I have indicated above though charming and interesting, cannot apply generally. It requires a predisposition to learning, a highly retentive memory and a keen intelligence. Even then it involves much waste of time and energy of the scholar.

What I have done in the Shantipur literacy plan is only to improve upon this method and to systematize it. The literacy plan which I had worked out for my first Jail experiment and later on the charts which I had prepared for initiating the illiterate adults into literacy in Hindi were no doubt based on psychological principles and were interesting to the extent to which interest can be stimulated by effort. The literacy charts prepared

since 1931 have something more. They have in them the response of the Scholar spontaneously going out in search of knowledge. They are not dry and do not depend for an artificial interest to be created.

It will be seen that the charts given in Appendix I (b) are mostly Bhajans which are on the tip of the tongue of the villagers and some of them are humorous saying from Ghagh with which the villagers are familiar. Sixteen such familiar Bhajans have been selected. These cover all the letters of the Alphabet. A thorough acquaintance with these alone with the seven Matra Charts and the five Milawat or conjunct letter charts can be taught within a month and a half. In another month and a half twenty-four selected longer songs can be gone through. All of them are familiar songs sung by the villagers. Two of them are extracts from Alha, two are Prabhatīs of Tulsidas, six Chaupais of Ramayan, two songs from Mira. The study of these is prescribed in the course for Stage No. 1.

It would not be out of place to explain some of the reasons for adopting this method of teaching before I proceed to discuss the psychological principles upon which this method of teaching "reading" is based. This approach to teaching has been purposely made for the following reasons :—

1. In all learning processes there is something as a "mental set" which is an important factor. It is the "receptive attitude" of the mind in the learner that goes

much further than the skill of teaching. For it is verily true that "you can take horse to water but you cannot make him drink."* All artificial interest in learning can go to a certain length and can evoke response of the scholar to a limited extent. But after all it becomes a task. On the contrary, should the subject of learning be of the liking of the scholar there is already the inner urge, the attention going out in search of the object. Favourable stimulus put in at such a moment comes in its proper setting and response is quick. Our cultivators on the rural side have more of the devotional bend of mind and yearn for literacy as a vehicle for reading some of the religious books as *Hanuman Chalisa* and *Ramayan*. It would be in the fitness of things to take maximum benefit of this mental attitude of the cultivator and to try to attack the illiteracy in him from this point.

2. It will be seen that small posters of the Bhajan charts will be issued to the scholars from day-to-day. These posters are to form the "Primer" for the adults. A sort of hanger will also be supplied and the teacher will instruct the adults to hang the posters at a place where the movements of the adults are most frequent. The adult scholar will not be under compulsion to make any serious effort to learn his Bhajans or to cypher the letters. Incidental glances in the course of his usual movements are all that is necessary and the posters

* Dr. John Daweys' "School and Society."

from their position of vantage will attract their attention. This will stimulate reading. Later on, since these posters would be of their taste, they may like to decorate their rooms with these sayings.

3. There is also a third consideration in view. It will be remembered that the "Shantipur Literacy Plan" is an outcome of the rare phenomenon of men and women who through their childish curiosity learnt to read Ramayan unaided. Shall we be able to do something of this sort in educating the women folk in the homes? The mottos being attractive, with the Bhajans and sayings of household familiarity and with a little direction from the adult scholars themselves, it may be expected that intelligent and enthusiastic young sisters and wives of the adults would develop a liking for reading. The Adult School teacher and the promoters of the Adult School should throw some inducement to the adults under instruction. An adult who succeeds in giving reading knowledge of Ramayan to his daughter, sister and wife may be paid Rs. 5 as reward and the lady may be given a present in the form of a well-printed copy of Ramayan. This is likely to go to some extent in breaking illiteracy amongst the women on the rural side.

What is needed is proper "motivation" amongst male adult scholars. The method is ably advocated by Dr. Frank C. Laubach, who has actually tried it on a modest scale with success as projects for his pupils in

Phillipines. As far as our teaching plan is concerned, the success is doubly promising. In the first place, women are more devotional in spirit than men and have some leisure in the noon. Secondly, this is exactly the method in which men and women have learnt to read Ramayan unaided under a "trial and error" method. With a little direction from the male member of the family and with the help of charts, they should show better results.

4. I have to refer the reader to aim No. 5 of the scheme on page 45. It will be recalled that both through the primary schools and the night schools a type of education has been sought to be extended which is secular in character. This type of education has some advantages, the most important being our aim to keep ourselves above religious dogmatism; it caters to the intelligence of man and makes him more rational and practical in life. The product of this type of education is not likely to fall an easy prey to blind faith since he is trained to approach every problem from the rational point of view. But this type of education has its limitations also and there lies some danger of overdoing it. There is no scope in such a type of education for training in emotions. It may enable him to increase his income, since it seems to be more of an immediately practical and technical nature. But there are higher values of life. There is something as a broadening culture and an abiding faith in an all-pervading Agency

a godliness which ensures better ethics and morals to the society. The devotional or religious side in its true sense is often not only ignored but ridiculed by the promoters of the secular type of education with the result that the firm moorings of a social being are lost. The individual becomes more critical seeking his personal gain instead of a far-reaching altruism.

Looking at the actual results of this type of education on the village side we find the products of this type of school evincing clear signs of a training in intelligence and developing shrewdness and powers of calculation which in quality are no better than the shrewdness of a Patwari. From this class are recruited a large number of touts who are known as "Village barristers". One fact cannot be denied that the products of this type of education have not so far proved instrumental to social solidarity. The fault is not theirs. We have failed to create in them higher emotions for social service, a spirit of leadership and sacrifice for the common good.

The present plan aims at removing this defect. It is contemplated that Ramayan would be read every Tuesdays, that a devotional touch would be given to the teaching in the schools. This is attempted not only because in the spread of literacy we shall be going along the lines of least resistance by capitalising the innate tendencies of the scholars for reading of the devotional books but also create in them "godliness". In this connection it is desirable to explain that our model

should be to inculcate in the minds of the village people the spirit of folk schools of Denmark.

I would not be guilty of divergence if I take liberty in describing what a folk school in Denmark is like and what useful purpose it has been serving in the economic affairs in that country, since I firmly believe that it is the enviable spirit of the Danish Folk School which can alone salvage the agricultural classes of India.

Denmark is a small country comprising less than 17,000 square miles of land and may in size equal three districts of the United Provinces. Its climate is humid and comparatively mild in winter and cool in summer with little or no extremes of temperature. The annual rainfall is about 25 inches and comes in due time. Some parts of this country are fertile while the lower tracts are sandy. The country has no mineral wealth and the inhabitants have to live on agriculture. It will be remembered that this country has to eke out its existence on agriculture in the midst of highly organised industrial and commercial countries like England, France and Germany and still their lot is not in any way inferior to those of the inhabitants of these commercial countries.

Some sixty years ago the country suffered much from poverty, pestilence and the like and would have continued in the same way, had not "Co-operation" which is the powerful weapon of the weak and the backward come to their rescue. It was this principle

of "Co-operation" taught through the Folk Schools that has done so much for the organization of both the production and sale of butter, cheese and eggs to help its agriculturist classes to hold their own against the competition of industrialists of Europe.

But it was not a type of co-operation with its exclusive emphasis on money-lending and mere economic advancement, nor were the workers of the type of our Supervisors who are often an improved edition of the Patwari. The officials and workers behind the Co-operative movement worked more as "inspirers" and leaders of the agricultural populace. For this it would be necessary to have a peep through the life and work of the founders of the Folk School Movement through which principles of Co-operative organisation have been propagated.

It was Father Grundtvig and his colleague Kold who had the insight to see that the devotional moorings of the agriculturists were getting cut off; that the agriculturists of Denmark were everyday getting more calculating, petty and selfish, that the individualistic tendencies in them were fast developing to their ruin. He went about preaching "piety," "godliness" and need for "congregational life." The curriculums of schools consisted more of devotional songs. He did not ignore the need for general information or for scientific education, but it was combined with the training of emotions. In himself he was an example of piety, good-will and service to humanity. This spirit still

prevades in the Danish Folk Schools of to-day. It is to be hoped that the Adult School contemplated under the scheme will keep this as its model.

Let us now revert to the methods of teaching literacy and the psychological basis behind it. The teacher should read the whole chart to the adults such as

“ Ram, Lachhman, Janki,

“ Jai Bolo Hanuman Ki ”

and repeat it three or four times moving his finger beneath the words. He may then point out the words “ Ram, Lachhman, etc. ” more pointedly and may even tell his students that the first word in the chart is Ram, second Lachhman and third Janki, etc. While the chart is still kept hanging on the sliding machine he should introduce individual words to the notice of the adults through the sliding frame. Thus when the slide of the word “ Ram ” is shown and visual acquaintance with it is given it should suddenly disappear and another slide of the word “ Lachhman ” come to view. The students should be encouraged to say it *at sight*. They may do so by comparing it with the Bhajan Chart kept hanging above or because of their acquaintance with the general shape and size which make them recognise that word. The exercise of changing of words on the sliding machine should be carried on for some time. The idea of the sliding machine is to give effect to the appearance of the word and its recognition. This method of teaching is known as the “ Look and Say Method ” in education.

It will be seen that the " Sentence Method " of teaching has been followed. The whole Bhajan or a sentence or a couple of sentences, are given for reading in the first instance. The sentence is then split up into the component words and an attempt is made to give full visual acquaintance with the words to the point of recognition at sight. On a second reading of the Bhajan Chart, the letters which happen to occur in the sentence will also be shown on the sliding machine and a visual acquaintance regarding their shape will be given. Writing comes last. In a word, the method of teaching " reading " is analytical. The sentence, the words and the letters come in their respective order. It will be seen that usual method of beginning with letters and then the combination of letters into words and lastly the teaching of reading of sentences is reversed under this method. Inasmuch as the old method is in vogue and in spite of the advocacy of new methods, the old method is still being persistently followed by the teachers, it is necessary to explain the psychological implications of the New Method.

The angle of perception has been measured to be of 60 degrees ; that is to say all things which fall within this cone are visible to the eye at a glance. It is therefore the eye that sees the objects as " whole " first and then attends to the parts. A glance at a tree or a house will bring to our perception the house or a tree as a " whole " before we fix the eye to their component

parts, such as the windows and the doors of the house or the branches and the fruit of the tree. Everybody knows that to look intently at an object or to fixate the eye at a certain point means an additional strain to the eye. It is, therefore, natural that in our method of teaching also we should be guided by this natural sequence.

Now let us consider how the eye moves in reading. Originally the eye was given to man not for the purposes of reading but to see fleeting objects such as a running deer for hunting purposes. The civilised man, however, has decided to use it to decipher the symbols on the printed page. The mechanism of the eye is really suited to the man's life in the forest. Now forces of civilization have forced him to use the eye to look on the paper at the symbols which are smaller in size than an ant. Historically this seems to be uncommon, if not an unnatural use of the organ of perception. Dr. Huéy made pioneer experiments in the movements of the eye. He attached a pointer to the pupil of the eye so that when the eye moved the pointer also moved and made impressions on the black of the glass. He thereby found that the eye moves in "a leap and pause" fashion and that its movements are "jerky."

The natural leap of the eye was found to be long enough to cover several words at a stretch. Words and phrases and not letters are the units of the perception span. It, therefore, follows that the speed with which we read

falls a good deal short of our physiological limit. In fact the physiological limit in reading is reached by very few of the fastest readers. In the light of these findings, it is advisable, nay highly essential, that we should not cut short the natural leap of the eye and impose thereby an additional strain. The eye in its movements swallows words and phrases together and any interference with them, is jarring to it. One has simply to enquire into the difficulties which a press proof-reader experiences in proof-correction. The eye runs over words while he is interested in scanning the letters. The process of reading involves leap and pause of the eye which covers words and phrases at a time. Context or thorough acquaintance with the features of the words helps the eye on its march. If no unfamiliar or a hopelessly misspelt word intervenes, the eye smoothly glides over without a stumble. In cases of blunders in printing, the smooth movement is interfered with and the eye stops with a jerk and a shock like the one resulting from a sudden putting on of a brake to a running car is experienced. The movement of the eye is something like a fast drive over a familiar street where a mere glance brings instantaneous recollection of familiar persons and situations in their true perspective. The only problem then in reading is to familiarise the learner sufficiently with words and phrases as "wholes" so that a passing glance may bring comprehension to him.

This is why "Sentence Method" is recommended by educational reformers.

In its true sense "reading" is recognition. When a familiar face or a situation comes to view we say in popular language that we "recognise" it. In the same manner when a familiar letter or a combination of letters appears to view, we are said to "read" it. In reading, letters stand for sounds and so far as reading of Hindi script is concerned there are only 35 different letters with which familiarity is required. They appear in combinations, sometimes with appendages or Matras. The scholars may be told that after all there are 35 different individuals who appear to the view dressed differently at different times. Sometimes they make appearance with a lathi and a cap, with one or two flags over their heads and so on. The skill in reading lies in quick recognition of these letters and their combinations.

Besides the researches of Dr. Huéy on the perception span and eye movements which has influenced the teaching methods of reading some other laboratory experiments may also be cited. Two batches of students of the same age with no previous experience in typing but possessing equal mechanical ability were taken for the experiment. One batch was to follow the sight method and the other was to be taught by the touch method—the latter under the guidance of an expert typist. The students who were asked to go by the sight method showed

a slightly greater progress than the latter during the first week and a half. The reason is simple. They were taking an intelligent initiative in learning while the latter had to undergo through the discipline imposed by the instructor. Consequently, however, those who learnt typing by the touch method showed steady and continued progress. In the case of those who pursued the sight method several "plateaus" or arrests in progress were seen. This and like experiments have demonstrated the fact that in all teaching one should adopt the methods in teaching of a skill which are in keeping with the ways in which that skill operates in practical life. One of the drawbacks of the sight method as well as the teaching of the letter methods is, that wrong habits in pursuing the skill are formed. A good deal of time is wasted in inhibiting the wrong habits. This point of inhibition may be illustrated by an example of everyday occurrence. A child which has formed a habit of eating with the left hand incidentally or under the negligence of the parent takes a long time to form the right habit of eating with the right hand. Wrong habits once contracted take a long time for inhibition before better and higher habits are formed. The advocates of the school of thought which will not follow the method would do well to remember this point.

Against this theory there is a school of thought which still persists in thinking that the traditional method is not bad for the simple reason that it has stood the test

of time. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss their objections and to explain the futility of such a stand.

1. It is claimed by these educators that they have taught the pupils by "letter method"; that they taught letters of the alphabet first, coached their scholars in combination of letters and on such sound foundation led them on to the safe road of reading sentences and passages. Nothing, however, is far from the truth. It may be that they taught the letters. But what is known as "reading" as such was learnt by the pupils by the sentences method. If any conclusive proof is wanted, one has simply to test the reading of the pupils of the first or second standard in the Primary Schools. From beginning to the end these children will read their lesson well, but if the examiner desires to take a different course and point out to a certain word or letter in the lesson and call upon the children to decipher it, children are puzzled. They will invariably begin again and come back to that word or letter for its recognition. This clearly demonstrates that children learn in spite of their instructors by the natural method. Contexts, serial order and other things come in and the lesson is learnt by heart. This is why the system of teaching by the sentence method is advocated as a first step in reading. Location and recognition of letters would come later.

2. The second objection of these educators is that the letters are not taught in sequence and according to the order in which the letters of the alphabets have been

arranged. Well, the sequence and the order in which letters are arranged as gutturals, linguals and palatals, etc., is a sequence and an order sought by scientists, but it is not necessarily a natural order. It is immaterial from the point of the child whether it learnt क first or ऋ the matra of ऋ first or that of ः। If a sequence and an order be necessary it may be given later, but that is no reason for inflicting a punishment, the drudgery and monotony of conning over letters in an artificial sequence.

3. The third objection of this school of thought is that whatever is being taught should be taught systematically and thoroughly lest wrong impressions upon the mind of the learner be formed and which might prove injurious from the point of view of the learning process. Inasmuch as there is a history and a tradition behind this superstition, it is desirable that this theory with its background be explained and the defects exposed.

It was Lord Bacon who first gave the simile to the mind as *Tabula Rasa* meaning that the child's mind is impressionable and that it all depends upon the educator to impress it the way he likes to mould it as he pleases. Lord Bacon probably cited it as a simile but later psychologists worked upon this simile with a dogmatism. They represented the mind something as a sensitive paper in Photography or the wax for catching impressions as in gramophone records. When the theory is over-worked this way, it means once impression is taken,

it is indelible and ineffaceable. Nothing can be farther from truth. Mind is a living organism. It is not like a dead mirror, passively receiving impressions. It is highly responsive. It goes out in search of stimuli and responds to them. In the light of experience it modifies and even recasts impressions or refuses them in toto or accepts them partially. It reserves to itself the right of twisting the impressions and of giving colour to it.

Apart from the native intelligence, it is the common experience of the teacher to find at least four types of students in his class :

1. Those who have their eyes and ears open but are absent-minded. They appear to be listening and seeing, but all words of the teacher are lost upon them. This is because they refuse all external stimuli. Internally their mind is wandering in a different place than the classroom.

2. There is another type of students who always give the teacher a cause for grievance. The teacher says something and they hear something else. The teacher shows something and they see something differently. This phenomenon occurs in those scholars in whose minds some current of thought was set afoot. An external stimulus came only to divert that current of thought in a rather different channel. The original current of thought however retained its previous characteristics.

3. There is the third type of students who follow the teacher in word and in spirit. This type of students go with the current of thought of the teacher.

4. There is still a fourth type where the mind of the scholars proceed vigorously with the thought of the teacher and even anticipate what is next coming from him.

It is high time that the old superstition of regarding the mind as "tabula rasa" be given up and mind be regarded as living organism capable of recasting and reconstructing its experiences and impressions. It is capable of forming generalisations. The bogey of thorough instruction at every stage need not stand in our way. What should be aimed at is that the method of instruction is made catching and is likely to keep up the attention of the scholars towards the subject-matter.

Under the Shantipur Literacy Plan the adults learn the mechanics of reading and writing and they complete the letters Matras and the Milawat rules in a month and a half. This means a little more than recognition of letters and their modifications. The Nagri script being highly phonetic and scientific in its modifications renders the task still easier. Under other methods also such as the letter method, the phonetic method, the word method and sentence method, the adults take a little longer time to pick up the knowledge of the recognition of letters. But, wherever they do, they take normally two or three months. Many people claim that when this much knowledge has been given the

task of imparting literacy is over. Mere obtaining the skill of recognising the letters is not "reading". "Reading" implicitly involves capacity for comprehension of the passage read and this comprehension depends upon the speed of reading.

Laboratory experiments have shown that there is a high correlation between the speed of reading and comprehension. Those who claim that they gave literacy to the adults in three months overlook this fact. If practice in reading is not pursued for longer time, there is a clear danger that the skill obtained in a short time will also be wiped out in a short time.

From the above remarks it will be seen that in teaching of readings two problems clearly emerge. The first is to give scholar speed in reading and secondly to create in him an abiding interest in reading. For our business should not be to teach adults "how to read" so much as to build in him the habit of "reading".

In public interest it is necessary here to remove the credulity of those who want to curtail the course of instruction in literacy to the adults to the minimum. The adults will naturally take much shorter time than children because of their mature intelligence and in particular the teaching of the Nagri script makes the task still easier because it is so phonetic and scientific. But there is a limit to shortening the period of instruction. We must aim, if we are to aim at all, to giving a stable literacy to the adults. Dr. Wissman's

laboratory experiments conducted in the first decade of this century to determine the optimum age of learning may be cited here.

* Dr. Wissman took two batches of scholars of equal intelligence. Both batches were to memorise a passage of nonsense syllables—that is a passage the words of which had no meaning. The first batch was to go through the passage ten times a day, while the other was to go through it only twice. The first batch memorised it in a week while the second batch took thrice the time. It was, however, found that the batch which had taken longer time to learn, retained the passage longer than the batch which had taken a shorter time; while the repetitions in the latter case were a little more than half taken by the former group. In learning of all skills *the age of learning* is a great factor. The longer the period over which a process of learning is distributed the greater is the probability of its being retained longer. Extended experiments of Dr. Wissman on memory show that it is necessary that the passage committed to memory be revised once after a lapse of time lest it is forgotten in toto.

(1) *Speed of "Reading"*.

Experiments have shown that "silent" reading is more profitable and conducive to acceleration of the speed

^oInteresting laboratory experiments on "Memory" of this German Psychologist are given in "The Learning Process" by Dr. Colvin.

of reading than "oral". In our plan it would be seen that from the second stage the adults will be given silent reading. There are also some methods of accelerating the speed of reading. One is called "Reliving" of experience. Under this method, the story or the lesson which is to be read by the scholars is orally narrated by the teacher. In reading the lesson the scholar is much helped and often pushed on by the context and his acquaintance with the story. As he proceeds, he anticipates what is coming next and goes on recognising words and phrases together since it is a matter of an experience. Similarly the reports of excursions undertaken by the scholars are gone through gluttonously by them. We have recommended this method to the teachers when they begin to teach under the modified Dalton Plan in Stages 2, 3 and 4.

(2) *Interest in Reading.*

Inasmuch as Ramayan would be read on Tuesdays, an interest in reading it would be developed in the scholar for a variety of reasons. Entertainment, love of music and possibility of getting congenial company or to be with the mass are factors besides his interest in reading which will drag him to the congregation and his habit of reading will come to a stay. He will certainly not relapse into illiteracy after pursuing studies in the adult school for one year.

A remarkable phenomena will be experienced by the teacher under this literacy plan, *viz.*, at the end of three months' period his scholars will show a remarkable progress in the speed of reading. If the graph of the speed of reading of scholars is maintained by the teacher, he will find that after 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ months, the curve of reading shoots up. Again the same phenomena would be experienced after 7 months. In the curve there would be plateaus in the second and the fifth month, and the teacher is likely to be disappointed at the arrest of progress when these "plateaus" occur. He must be told that "plateaus" are only normal stages in progress. All progress is "saltatory". A sort of re-birth is experienced by the scholar under instruction. It is not only on the psychic side that progress is saltatory but even on the physical plain, the same phenomena holds good. If water is kept heating, it seems to absorb all heat. The temperature no doubt goes up but the nature of water does not show any sign of change. However the heat is accumulated. Temperature reaches a point and suddenly water bursts into boiling. Boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 and 13 and 16 respectively appear to shoot up in height. The smothering fire suddenly bursts into flames, etc., are some of the instances of this "saltatory nature" of progress. In all progress the same phenomenon appears. The

(80)

scholar is no doubt making a steady progress though not perceptible on the curve. It is after accumulation of practice for a time that the curve of progress shoots up.

CHAPTER VII.

TEACHING OF WRITING TO THE ADULTS.

The teaching of writing to the adult scholars is an easy affair for the simple reason that the adults have control over their finger-movements. This is not, however, the case with children who with great difficulty hold the pen. Illiterate adults are often skilled artisans. Drawing of sketches and ornamental designs do not stand in their way. Will it then be a difficult thing for them to write the letters of alphabet provided they have a clear picture about their shape and the different turns they take? What is more important in writing is that the adult should have a clear mental picture about the letter. The teacher should teach the reading of charts first and at the time of revision ask his scholar to "transcribe" the Bhajans on the writing slips which will be supplied to him.

In Stage 2 he should ask them to transcribe the Hanuman Chalisa which the adults will have learnt by heart. He might motivate them to writing by a little appeal to their sentiment. He might tell them that it would be a meritorious act to copy out the poem of the Hanuman Chalisa in a beautiful hand and to present it

(82)

to a friend. This will create an additional interest in writing good hand.

In Stage 3 he should begin dictation and in Stage 4 writing of letters and applications, etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

TEACHING OF ARITHMETIC.

The teaching of arithmetic to the adults is and ought to be an easy affair for the simple reason that unlike children we get here mature intelligence where powers of comprehension are sufficiently developed. It is a matter of common observation that the adults without any technique of account-keeping or of arithmetic carry out their business of bartering, purchase and sale correctly. It is also a matter of common knowledge that an ordinary adult can count number up to 20 and has got independent notions about number; that he knows the relative values of the different weights and coins in use. However, it is a matter of great regret that the adults under instruction get terrified at the very idea of learning arithmetic with the result that the teacher in a few days gives up all attempt of teaching them arithmetic. How then has this inferiority complex got hold on the minds of the adults? Here again the teacher has shown his skill in making simpler things more difficult.

Arithmetic is nothing but account-keeping and for the sake of convenience the word "Account-keeping" (*दिसाब*) may be used. In the initial stages it

will be worthwhile to introduce the adult into account-keeping according to the system of the Mahajans in India where they have got lines for coins, paisa, anna and four-anna piece as horizontal and vertical. It is much easier for an adult to add lines together and to subtract the number of lines from another but bigger in number instead of the addition and subtraction of numbers. This type of addition and subtraction an illiterate adult can pick up even on the first day of his joining the school. This engenders a sort of confidence in his heart about the subject. He feels that he has learnt something worthwhile and feels confident that what is known as "Account-keeping" is as simple affair and he can learn it. To create such a confidence in the scholar and to keep it up is a principle of psychology of first importance from the point of the art of teaching. This method of introducing the adults into account-keeping has an additional benefit. They will easily be in a position to understand their dealings with the Mahajans. Again, the principle of "carrying over" is not so easy to understand and many a scholar after making a long headway in learning arithmetic fails to comprehend its proper significance. But in this sort of account-keeping one has simply to tell the adults that the different coins such as rupees, four-anna pieces, anna pieces and paisas are kept in different compartments and mixing them up would lead to confusion. They also know that six paisas is the same thing as one anna and two paisas and

when it comes to the question of sorting of the one-anna piece, it must be carried to the compartment where anna pieces alone are deposited. At a later stage a difficulty may arise in subtracting a sum like $\text{₹} 7 \frac{1}{2}$ seven and half annas from ten annas and three $\text{₹} 3$. The teacher should explain the basic principles but in popular language and tell the scholars thus: If two paisas is a smaller quantity than three paisas, let us take out one anna piece from the sum and change it into paisas and so on. Similarly, changing one rupee coin into four-anna pieces, one four-anna coin into one-anna pieces and one-anna coin into four paisas will help him out of such difficulties. It should be noted that though explanation is in popular language, the basic principle is sound. In a similar manner at a still later stage when it comes to explaining the notions of *digits* in number the teacher has to make use again of the self-same simile and to tell his scholars that here we have separate compartments for keeping one rupee coins, 10-rupee notes, 100-rupee notes and 1,000-rupee notes and so on. In the same manner as lines for paisa, one-anna piece, four-anna piece, the writing of weights such as maunds, seers, chhataks and land measurements in bigha, biswa and biswansi, etc., may be taught. Addition and subtraction in these is simple.

Side by side, the writing of number and some of the most recurring tables such as that of 4, 8, 12 and 16

may be taken up. Once additions and subtractions of the type noted above is finished, additions and subtractions of compound numbers such as rupees, annas and pies, etc., may be taught.

After giving a little drill in working out the sums in the remaining two rules of multiplication and division, the teacher may again revert to the teaching of accounts of the Rokar Bahi as maintained in a Co-operative Society. Experience shows that under a skilful teacher "Farmer's Arithmetic" can be finished up in six months. Suitable exercise books are also provided in the set. For more particulars the teacher is asked to read the introduction to my "Farmer's Arithmetic," Part I.*

On the methods of teaching arithmetic, I will conclude the chapter by emphasising the following points :—

1. Concrete examples can be more easily understood both by children and adults than abstract sums. For example, an adult will not easily solve a simple sum as "Add or subtract 15 to or from 18". But if the case is put in a concrete shape as Ram Bharose has 15 bhelis of gur while Ram Lal has 18" the addition and subtraction of bhelis becomes a concrete and intelligible proposition to the mind of the adult.

*Farmer's Arithmetic, Part I, has specially been written for use in the adult schools.

2. Long sums in arithmetic extending over tens of thousands are unnecessary and as such should be avoided.

3. Sums on vulgar fractions are unnecessary from the point of knowledge of arithmetic which a cultivator may be supposed to know. The practical utility of the knowledge of the vulgar fractions, it may be argued, would be felt in calculating simple and compound interest. Considering, however, the labour spent on the drudgery and the rare occasions on which the knowledge of vulgar fractions would be requisitioned it is desirable to give it a goodbye and the work may be taken by teaching of decimal fractions.

4. Fantastic and imaginary examples in arithmetic should be avoided. The following are some of the illustrations of the type:—

- (i) A man is 5' 6" tall and weighs 135 lbs., his wife is 5' 2" tall. What must be her weight?
- (ii) Henry VIII had six wives. Find out the number of wives for Henry IV?
- (iii) A man while crossing a river found that water was 5 feet deep after having crossed it for 2 feet. Calculate the depth of the river at 30 yards from the bank?
- (iv) Chaubey's Choti is 2 feet long. What will be the length of Dubey's Choti?

5. Only such illustrations and objects for sums be selected with which the adults are perfectly acquainted and which are of daily occurrence. As far as possible they should relate to the cultivators' normal transactions of marketing, agricultural operations and other dealings in the community.

CHAPTER IX.

TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, EPICS AND CIVICS.

Geography.

For the teaching of Geography in the adult schools, two books have specially been written. One is "Zamin Asman ki Baten" and the other "Bharat ke Mashhur Asthan". In the teaching of Geography, the teacher should keep before him proper perspective regarding the needs of the village people for the knowledge of Geography. If they know the places of pilgrimage, their importance and the things worth seeing there as well as the routes to reach them, one of their needs would be served. As cultivators, they are interested in the sale of the commodities they grow. A little information regarding the regional geography with reference to agricultural products of India and rainfall would be helpful to them from another point of view. A narration of the commercial places from which the agricultural produce is cleared off would add to the utility of his knowledge. He is politically controlled by an administration and its departments. A little narration about the capital towns in India would be useful to him from the third point of view. He

lives in an industrial world and may be given a little knowledge about the chief centres of industry in India. To satisfy this need the book entitled "Bharat, ke Mashhur Asthan" has been written.

It is desirable that he should have a fair idea regarding the occurrence of day and night, eclipses and changes of seasons and the direction of monsoons. To this end the book entitled "Zamin Asman ki Baten" has been written. The teacher should give a narration or description about these. He should remember that what he has to do is to give a fair idea to the scholars and not to drill them into the subjects for examination purposes, where a scholar may be called upon to recapitulate information *ad seriatim*. If possible description may be accompanied by pictures or information be given with the help of magic lantern slides.

The scholars need not be drilled into definitions of cape, bay, gulf, peninsula, island, etc. But it is necessary that they should be able to read the map which often is a difficult task made more so by the methods adopted by the teacher. He should adopt a simple method and should start giving them an idea about the directions in the following manner :—

He should place a blackboard on the floor of the school and make the mark of school house in the centre of it. His adult scholars have full knowledge about directions and he should mark on the blackboard all the situations which lie to the East, such as the houses

of X, Y, Z, then the fields, the trees, the tank, etc, as one goes Eastward. The same thing he should do with the West, North and South. Now before the scholars is a map of the village as can be seen on the flat floor. He should next pick up the blackboard with North "UP" and hang it on the wall. He should tell his scholars that it is customary to show North upwards, South downwards, East to the right hand and West to the left hand. He should give the scholars a little practice in reading the village map before proceeding to the wall map of the province or of the country for purposes of ascertaining of relative positions of places on the map.

History.

In the teaching of History to the adults the incidence of dates and historical sequence are matters of very little importance. What is really needed is that they should be acquainted with the development of the currents of thought which have moulded and are moulding fabric of the society. This is required in order that they may thoroughly understand the importance of the social structure, customs and traditions which prevail in the society and which they have inherited. For example, the village people need to be informed how the caste system came into being and under what circumstances and for what purpose it was originated. They need to be informed about the fourfold stages of man's life on earth into Brahmcharya, Grahyaatha, Banaprastha and Sanyas ;

they need to be informed about various rituals in the marriage and other ceremonies and their significance; they also need to be informed about the history of various festivals they partake in and the socio-religious importance behind them. This part of the teaching of the history relates to his past heritage and the villager is really interested in them. The adult school teacher will depend upon the general information he has gathered on these points. He will also get chances to explain these points, while the adults will be reading the two prescribed books, viz., "Saras Ramayan" and "Saras Mahabharat". It is recommended that he should read the book entitled "Hinduon ke Tyohar" (हिन्दुओं के त्यौहार) to enable him to explain the importance of the various festivals as they occur during the life of one year of the adult school in the village. Two books on history have specially been written for adult schools. They are entitled "Itihasic Kahanian," Parts I and II. In these books lives of eminent personages have been dealt with. The teacher should explain to his adults the social, economic, religious and political circumstances in which these persons were born, the problems which faced them, the methods which they adopted to solve them and the success they attained in their undertaking. The lives selected are modern personages. The teacher should explain how their lives and thoughts have reacted upon the life of the society.

Epics.

The book entitled "Pauranic Kathain" has been written for this purpose. Some twenty representative stories have been selected and the teacher should try to bring out the ethical import behind the epic stories such as Dhruva stands for single-minded perseverance to attain an ideal, Harish Chandra for keeping his word at any cost, Mira for simplicity of mind combined with intense devotion, Savitri for loyalty, Shravan Kumar for service and obedience to parents and so on.

Civics.

Two books on Nagric Shastra are in the press and they have been written specially for the adult schools. Part I deals with administration including the work of the nation-building departments of the Government. The purpose of teaching Civics is to acquaint the citizen with the administration under which his economic, moral and political personality is to grow. By the very nature of it, the working is invisible and abstract. The teacher is asked to follow his usual pedagogical dictum, *viz.*, from the concrete to the abstract or from the known to the unknown. He should take pains to explain the working of the village organisation and its administration thoroughly and in doing it he will find the basis for development into provincial and national administration. For example, the patwari represents the revenue system; the chaukidar the police department; the village panchayat the provincial assembly or the

district boards ; the panchayat committee which settles the disputes the judicature ; the schoolmaster the education department and so on. Once he explains the working of the village panchayat and the village administration thoroughly, the activities into which they branch out later on can easily be appraised by the village mind.

In Part II, knowledge of some public utilities and some social problems which face the society is attempted to be given. In this connection it has to be noted that the teaching of the subject is very tempting and the teacher is likely to forget the proper limits and may drift into unnecessary controversies. He is not supposed to take sides. What is really aimed at is to present to the adult the problems as they stand—their historical background and the pros and cons as advanced by different schools of thought. He must eschew all personal opinion and if his natural inclination forbid him to carry out the instructions, he would be well advised not to teach these lessons, or there is a danger that the teaching of other subjects would suffer by introduction of endless talk on these problems.

CHAPTER X.

MISCELLANEOUS SUGGESTIONS.

In a preceding chapter, I have pointed out various reasons for the failure of the Night Schools in the spread of literacy amongst the illiterate populace. In the present chapter it is proposed to say something about the organisation of the Adult Schools, its time-table and other details.

1. Organization.

Elsewhere I have described the function of an Adult School as a social institution, as an evening club or a Bhajan Mandal. The Adult School which we contemplate to run in a village would hold regular classes for one year only and after that it would automatically convert itself into a reading club, a Bhajan Mandal or a music club. The discipline of the primary school type should not be enforced here. The teacher should not behave himself as a superior being nor should he exercise his dominating attitude over the scholars. He has to conduct himself as a friend, a philosopher and a guide and must meet on equal footing with his students. Secondly, conforming to the education code which is so very necessary elsewhere need not be enforced in the case of the adult schools. All formality must disappear

and the adult school be regarded by the scholars as their social club, an evening gathering where they meet for recreation. Though it is true that in the first year of its inception, this social club will meet regularly for an hour and a half and formal instruction to a certain extent would be given there, the teacher should not forget the perspective and should work up the adult school in such a manner that its conversion into a Bhajan Mandal or a reading club would be an easy matter. They should, therefore, earmark one day of the week, preferably Tuesday, for the singing of Ramayan and other songs. Regular monthly meetings of the scholars should be held. Resolutions regarding the hours of instruction, management of the school and such incidental matters pertaining to the Adult School or the club be recorded in the proceedings book. The school should be regarded as a training ground for the social club or the Bhajan Mandal which the scholars eventually run on their own initiative and responsibility.

2. Age of Scholars.

It is our experience that scholars between the ages of 15 and 25 show more enthusiasm in enrolling themselves in an adult school. Very few after the age of 25 or 30 evince much interest, since in India they regard themselves as done up creatures. Teachers should make an attempt to enrol as many as possible elderly men in the school. He should be more anxious to enrol some of the leading men of the village. I have, however,

observed that in some adult schools boys between the ages of 5 and 15 are admitted. One consideration is advanced in favour of their admission, *viz.*, the economic condition of their parents is bad and hence they have to be wage-earners. Their admission is attempted to be justified on the ground of repairing the omission of their parents. However, the practice is undesirable. In the first place, elderly men sitting with children do not make a congenial company. The bold humour of the adult would be something undesirable from the point of the child but worse than that, sometimes it so happens that some of the smart children grasp the lesson quicker than some of the dullards amongst the grown-up and when a question is put to the class, the small children show superiority with the result that the whole class including the teacher himself bursts into laughter. One by one the grown-up scholars leave off and the adult school sooner or later becomes a school for children. The practice of admitting small boys in the adult schools should be discouraged. I have observed that in some adult schools even girls below 9 and 10 are admitted. The motive may be innocent and good, but this also should be avoided on the grounds stated above.

3. Number of Scholars for an Adult School.

When the school is started there is a rush of students but the number dwindles away steadily. The adult school teacher would do well to select only 20 scholars who promise to attend punctually and regularly, for an

hour and a half for a year. He may get them to make a solemn pledge publicly just to impart a little sanctity to the promise.

4. Fees for the Adult School.

Should fees be charged from the scholars of an adult school is an important question. I am firmly of opinion that fees to the extent of half an anna per month should be charged. The purpose of levying fees is not at all to finance the school or to spend this money for the supply of text-books or stationery provided to the scholars. There are three arguments why fees should be charged. If the payment of fees in cash is regarded as hardship by the adults, they may be allowed to pay in kind and fees should be collected in advance. The reasons for insisting on fees are as follows :—

1. In human nature, things which are received *gratis* are not much valued. It has been my experience that as long as I had not charged fees from adults, the attendance of scholars was irregular. But later on, when the school charged fees, boys began to be rebuked for irregular attendance by their parents for the simple reason that fees were being charged irrespective whether the scholar attended or not. Fine for irregular attendance has also a salutary effect. The teacher should, however, remember that instead of taking the responsibility of fining the scholar himself, it is desirable that he should go the other way round. He should place the fact before the meeting of the scholars and by

throwing in a hint should move them to fine scholars for irregular attendance.

5. Hours of Instructions.

This is a very important point in running of an adult school. It has been my experience that in the absence of fixed hours of instruction many an adult school has gone to pieces. What generally happens is that the teacher declares that he would start teaching in the evening meaning an hour after dusk. He in fact starts at half-past seven and sits lingering up to eleven. Some students come early, some late, some only to mark their attendance and still others simply to peep into the school and to go home. Both the teacher and scholars are put to a loss. The teacher should, therefore, declare that the school will meet for an hour and a half only—not a minute less and not a minute more. The time of starting school should be fixed by the resolution of the scholars at the monthly meeting and this would naturally differ from season to season.

It is argued by teachers that the village folk are quite indifferent to time. When they are called at seven they would with difficulty assemble by nine. I am not prepared to accept this slur cast against the village people. I know if a train is tabled to start from a certain station at five in the morning they do catch it. The responsibility for the alleged unpunctuality among the villagers is of teacher's making. Let him be punctual and strict himself. Let him start school in time to the

minute and let him close it in time to the minute and the trouble would soon be over. It is again argued that an adult school teacher has no watch. Well in these days good timepieces can be had for Rs. 5 and the promoters of schools would be richly rewarded in the bargain by supplying a timepiece to the school. The promoters of the adult schools have to be really strict in this respect. The teacher will have to notify hours of instruction on the notice-board. I had amusing experiences on this point. When in my surprise visits to the night schools I found nothing but darkness in the class room, the teacher was there ready with his explanation. He had either closed the school or had yet to start it.

6. How to Start an Adult School.

Half an hour prior to the starting of the classes the teacher should ring the bell or blow a whistle, thus intimating the scholars that the school would meet within half an hour and they should prepare themselves for coming to the school. Five minutes before the starting of the classes the second bell should be rung thus intimating the scholars that they should leave home for the school. Exactly at the fixed hour he should ring the third bell and start the prayer which should not last for more than five minutes. Immediately after the prayer he should call the roll and those who come late should be rigorously asked to go home with a gentle word that they would be welcome to come the next day

provided they come in time. Teacher should take pain to explain the importance of punctuality to the scholar. Working on this plan he would not be wasting his time unnecessarily.

7. Time-table and Class Work.

Hours of instruction have been limited to only an hour and a half. The teacher should make the maximum use of it. It is highly desirable that the teacher should have some fixed time-table. A model time-table should be carefully planned. Tuesdays should be reserved for Ramayan singing and Katha. It is not very necessary that special holiday on Sunday should be given. If, however, the adult school teacher happens to be a District Board teacher, he may be allowed this holiday. During Stage No. 1, that is for the first three months, all adults would be taught together and later on they would be divided into 3 or 4 groups of five or six each. The modified method of the Dalton plan of teaching should be introduced at this stage. It would be necessary to explain here what the Dalton plan is like. It is suggested that groups or committees should be formed with due consideration to the intelligence and educational attainments of scholars comprising the groups. Once in a week each committee would take assignments in reading, writing and working out the sums of arithmetic. The leader of the group holds himself responsible for the progress and discipline of his group. Silent reading in the class

is recommended. At the time of making the assignments the teacher should explain some of the important points of the assignment and also give leading questions for the lessons. A handbook of assignments containing leading questions on the lesson is in the press and five copies of these will also be supplied to each school. It is highly desirable that once in a month the teacher should call upon one of these committees to read out the report or to give out an oral narration of the book read by the group in that month. This procedure is calculated to encourage the initiative for independent reading in the students. The teacher, under such a plan, would be working for half an hour with one of the committees in one subject or the other. Thus if there are three committees he will work with committee No. 1 in reading in the first period; with committee No. 2 in writing in the second period, with committee No. 3 in arithmetic in the third period. Three days in a week, the last period should be reserved for collective instruction. The teacher should give general information in this period. Generally speaking he should inform them of epidemic diseases, agricultural processes or should read out extracts from newspapers and magazines. Occasionally when a festival is impending, he should explain to them the history and social importance of the function.

8. Extra Curriculum Activities.

Under an enthusiastic teacher it is possible to start a Scout troop or a Navayuvak Dal in the village. The Scout movement is calculated not only to inculcate a spirit of social service in the minds of village youth but also to give them discipline and alertness in their activities—a thing which they so badly lack in. It is possible for the teacher also to organise Deshi games, inter-village competitions and tournaments, etc. In this respect the teacher will do well to give a new orientation to the existing village games of Kabaddi, Tuli-lili and Ata-Pata on moonlit nights. One thing should be remembered, expensive games should not be played or introduced.

9. School Registers.

Every adult school will be supplied with the following registers:—

- (a) Attendance Register.
- (b) Scholars' Progress Report Register.
- (c) Proceedings Book.
- (d) Receipt Book.

(a) *Attendance Register.*—It is supposed to be the most important register of the school. Its utility however has been sometimes reduced to *nil* by the queer ways of the teachers. Sometimes the roll is not called for days and weeks together. I had an interesting experience in which on my visit to the school the teacher

quickly ran home to repair his failure to fill in the attendance register for nearly a week and curiously enough in a hurry had filled in attendance of two days to come. I have also come across the instances when the adult scholar was not in the village for weeks together but he was marked present in the attendance register. Farzi attendance register is almost a common feature of all the primary and adult schools and this defect creeps in not through any intention but the negligence of the teacher to call the roll regularly at the fixed time. It has been observed that when attendance had not been marked for several days at a stretch the teacher attempted to repair the omission from memory. As I have elsewhere said, roll shall be called just after the prayer in an adult school.

(b) *Progress Report Register of Adults.* - I had to introduce this register in 1931. Continuously I was experiencing strange phenomena of the teachers producing before me the same adult repeating the same verse or reading the same lesson with facility on three successive inspections which came with an interval of a month each. Credit must be given to the ingenious ways of the teachers of which there are many. But the promoters of schools have to devise some check and this is one of them. In the progress report, in addition to the age, the caste, the date of admission, date of removal and its cause along with the previous education the scholar had before joining the school, he will have to

maintain record of the scholar's progress in reading, writing and arithmetic from month to month. The progress report has an additional advantage, *viz.*, the examiner or the inspecting authority can see at a glance how an individual scholar is progressing from time to time. On the same register there is a separate page for recording the marks obtained by the scholar in the quarterly examinations on the strength of which the teacher would be entitled to the quarterly bonus.

(c) *Proceedings Book*.—The adult school should be regarded by the teacher as a club or a society. On the first day of the month a meeting should be called and such questions as fixing of time for starting the school, distribution of the work of management such as ringing of the bells, lighting, cleaning of the school house and even marking the attendance, points about games, etc., may be discussed at this meeting and recorded in the proceedings book. The adult school should be regarded as the training ground for the conduct and management of a Ramayana or singing or reading club into which it will eventually merge.

(d) *Receipt and Cash-book*.—I have elsewhere said that fees for instruction to the extent of half an anna per month should be charged from every scholar. Receipt for every pie received should be given. The funds raised will be at the disposal of the club or society for the purchase of Jazim, Dhol, Manjira, Lantern, etc. I will not object even if the members of the Club want to

spend the money on distribution of Shirini on Tuesdays after the Ramayana Katha, but fees must be charged, receipts issued and Rokar Bahi properly maintained preferably by an adult scholar elected by the club. He will naturally work under the direction of the teacher in the beginning.

10. The School House.

Adult classes may be held in the verandah of the headman of the village, but a tactful teacher can do much in this respect. He has the youth of the village in his control and provided he motivates them, they can erect school house with kachcha walls, a little outside the village which will serve as a permanent club house or Bhajan Mandal or Bhawan for the village. If the members of the club are left to their own resources they know how to collect materials for the roof. They can put a little flower garden also. Such a site should be selected for the construction of a club house where they can command some flat *parti* land for games and plays and where they will have their Akhara for wrestling in the rainy season.

11. Selection of Teacher.

From the preceding pages the reader must have formed a fair idea of our aim of starting an adult school in a village. The adult school is going to be a harbinger of a reading club, a social club or a Ramayana club. It is to sow seeds for future improvements, for better organization of the youth of the village, to put

heart into the peasantry which is labouring under a depression. When the ideal is clear, the selection of the teacher also becomes a simple affair. We want a teacher who is capable of leadership, has a smiling face and takes on his work with delight. No deep learning in the teacher is sought, but the capacity to "lead" and to "inspire". If the teacher is a vernacular middle passed man, our purpose would be served. At the word of the school, an idea naturally strikes itself and we go in search of one who knows the art of teaching, *i. e.*, the gentleman in charge of the neighbouring District Board School. But it is not quite necessary that a trained teacher should be sought or invited. Experience has also shown that the District Board teachers are of doubtful utility in Rural Reconstruction. If there is a local vernacular middle passed man in the village or has his residence at a short distance from the village, he should be preferred. Smart, active villageman, aspirant of leadership be preferred to the learned Pandit of the District Board. In the first instance, once the local man is inspired with the spirit of social service and dormant germs for the leadership are awakened in him, he is not likely to give up the good work when payment for adult school work is stopped a year later as it is bound to be. Under his leadership, the Ramayana club would continue to meet for many years to come. Incidentally, this will relieve unemployment problem of the educated young men on the countryside.

12. Remuneration to the Teacher.

When the question of remuneration to a teacher stands before the eyes, one naturally thinks of fixing some monthly remuneration. Experience has shown that this does not work nicely, particularly when it is a question of running a night school. Payment on result basis or a modified plan of small monthly payments with quarterly bonus on result basis would work much better. It will be conceded that on an average a remuneration of Rs. 5 a month for teaching work of an hour and a half would be adequate. The school would be paid Rs. 2 for lighting charges separately. The plan for small monthly payments with quarterly bonus would be like this. The teacher would get as his fixed monthly salary of Rs. 2 and if at the end of 3 months he earns a bonus of Rs. 9, he should have no reason to complain. Under the scheme of payments by results he can earn even Rs. 12 provided his work is very satisfactory. The method of fixing the bonus would be on a scale like this. Suppose there are twenty adults under instruction and if the teacher can get annas 8 after every adult, he will have no cause or reason for grievance. It is not likely that all adults will make the same progress, some will be classed in A division, a large number of them in B and some in C and the rest in D. The adult school teacher would be entitled to annas ten for every adult standing in A division, annas eight for those in B division, annas six for those in C, and *nil* for those who happen to score

the D division. This will work as an impetus for the teacher to put life and energy in the work.

13. Training of Teachers.

Teachers, no doubt will have to be trained not only in the methods of teaching but also in scouting and in rural reconstruction. It is these teachers who would be instrumental in giving a shape to the better organization of the village community and the Ramayana club. The ways and the spirit of running an adult school will have to be given to the teachers. One month's course would be enough. The training class can be arranged in every district with the co-operation of the Agricultural Inspector, the Co-operative Inspector, the District Medical Officer of Health and the Rural Development Inspector. If the Veterinary Assistant Surgeon gives a few lectures on cattle diseases, the teachers will be much profitted. Scouting will have to be taught and for this the co-operation of the Deputy Inspector of Schools will be very valuable.

The inspection of the adult schools is really a difficult problem rendered so by the very fact that the classes meet at night and for a short time. This is one of the reasons why the payment on the result basis is recommended. Quarterly examinations should be conducted by competent authorities of the Education Department, if they can undertake the responsibility.

14. Agencies which can take up the Responsibility of Running Adult Schools

Before I discuss the agencies which can take up the work of adult education with advantage, a few considered remarks would not be out of place.

So far wherever adult education has been tackled it has been done so in an half-hearted manner. In some places some consolation money is given as remuneration to the teacher. In others, only lighting charges and books and in most of them the work of planning curriculum and methods of instruction is left in the hands of the unexperienced teachers and in a still large number of cases supervision is almost neglected. The motive behind starting an adult school is always pious—a compassionate feeling to help the backward peasantry in making suitable adjustment in the society of to-day. But it is to be observed that nowhere the result has been encouraging. The money so far spent has been largely a waste and the object is never realised leading to the disappointment in the promoters of the movement. Adequate arrangements for supervision and inspection of schools, planning of the curriculum and a well-defined aim of adult education are conditions which are very necessary for any appreciable results in adult education.

1. *District Boards*.—The education committee of the District Board is a statutory body which can easily take up this work in the district, provided they are so inclined and they can work out the scheme with great

success, since they can command the services of trained teachers and have an inspectorial staff for the supervision. It is devoutly to be wished that the District Boards will include adult education in their programme for breaking the illiteracy of the district. The recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture setting out the advantages which adult education will bestow are commended for their perusal. The authorities of the District Board will please consider in particular the benefits Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7 noted in Chapter on Adult Education in India.

2. *Rural Development.*—In each district Rural Development work has been started in at least 72 villages and there is a keen feeling that literacy will be a great stabilising factor in permanently establishing the improvements effected. The best plan would be to make a three years' programme for each centre of an organisor. Four adult school teachers selected from the local literate men may be asked to work under the Rural Development Organisor as his assistants and should be given charge of three villages. This assistant should finish adult education in one village in one year and then tackle the other village and then the third. In this manner in three years, the programme of adult education would be finished up. This will spread enlightenment and widen the horizon of the members of the Rural Development Associations.

3 *The Co-operative Department.*—Almost in all districts, officers of the Co-operative Department are

working and the number of societies in the districts range from 100 to 300. A large number of these societies have some funds for charitable and other welfare purposes. This adult education scheme has particularly been so devised that a society which has Rs. 125 to spare from these funds can run an adult school for the education of 20 adults.

4. *Private Agencies.* - In all districts there are charitable associations and agencies for social service. They also would do well to take up this scheme.

15. Expenses of Running an Adult School.

The following is an estimate for running an adult school with 20 scholars under instruction including the cost of books, exercise books, lighting charges, etc.:—

	Rs.
1. Remuneration to the teacher (payment on result basis)	60
2. Cost of four lanterns and glasses ...	6
3. Cost of lighting charges (at Rs. 2 per month)	24
4. Cost of blackboard and the sliding machine,	7
5. Cost of text-books, exercise books and registers for the adult school ...	25
6. Contingent charges	3
Total ...	125

Note.—Nos. 4 and 5 can be had from the Manager, Saraswati Sadan, Daraganj, Prayag.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

The Charts—An Introduction.

The method of teaching with the help of charts for initiating the illiterate adults in literacy has specially been recommended. The method makes learning easy, quick and delightful. In the first place since the charts are printed in bold type, a large number of adults can learn together. Secondly, the letters being bold, the different turns which the letters take can be easily brought to the notice of the scholars, especially when the illiterate adult is to be introduced for the first time in that mysterious art of deciphering symbols on the printed page. Thirdly, reading becomes delightful, causes least strain to the eye and when it comes to the reading of the Bhajan in a chorus, a kind of group-consciousness in reading is awakened, the reading of the charts ceases to be a task and becomes a pleasure.

In Appendix B the charts which I had introduced in the Nagpur Literacy Plan are given. It will be seen that one word which is not modified by Matras and is in common use amongst village people is selected and is written in a number of sentences, through each of which it is repeated indiscriminately. Recognition of the word is the "problem" for the learner. In the same manner in the word charts, which are to follow the

teaching of the sentence charts and letters which go to form this particular word are distributed indiscriminately over a number of meaningful words to form " problems " for recognition of the scholars.

This method of teaching was superseded in 1931 for reasons stated in Chapter 6.

The Shantipur Literacy Plan.

In Appendix C, sixteen Bhajan charts are given. They cover all the letters of the Nagri alphabet. Such Bhajans have been selected as are to be found on the tip of the tongue of an ordinary cultivator. They may not be regarded as final and the best and I am prepared to say that better Bhajans can be selected by persons more fitted than myself. What I only desire to say is that teaching should begin with such sayings, sentences, or songs which are most liked by a particular group of scholars to whom literacy is to be given. For example if the group of scholars is interested in Nautanki, the most popular songs from Nautanki may be selected to initiate the illiterate into literacy. In the same way if the scholars are interested in Alha, lines from Alha should be selected. When it comes to imparting literacy to children, I subscribe to the view that the sayings which are most common amongst the group of children and which they frequently use in playing games such as *हाथी घोड़ा पालकी । जय बोली कन्हैया लाल की ।* should be selected. I have selected Bhajans or devotional sayings since I know that a very large number of our cultivators are

devotional-minded and they would prefer to be taught this way.

In the same manner those who want to adopt this method in other languages will keep this as their guiding principle, *viz.*, to select such sayings and songs as appeal to the scholars most. For example if the charts are to be made in Marathi, the songs which the warkaries (वार्कर) on that side say on the way to Pandarpur, as "Abhangas" of Tukaram and Janabai may be selected. For Gujarathi, songs of Narsi Mehta and Mira would be suitable. In fact in every Indian language the songs of saints are available. They make an appeal to the cultivators' hearts. Instead of trying laboriously to write story lessons, under the sentence method plan of imparting literacy, what a splendid opportunity we get, if we capitalise the existing material, the immortal sayings of our poets which moves the hearts of the people. These songs are more than stories and sentences in themselves.

It is a common experience that scholars take a much shorter time in picking up letters when initiated into literacy through verse than through prose. Any number of primers for children see the light of the day in which story lessons are written in verses—often sounding grotesque on account of laboured versification. In the pithy sayings and songs of our saints, we get all the requisite things for efficient teaching, stories and sentences, songs and life.

For students of Urdu, common *Shers* and *Kawwalees* may be selected. In a word, this method of teaching emphasises the following procedure: Couplets, Bhajans, *Dohas* or *Shers* or *Kawwalees* would be selected for teaching. I subscribe to the view that teaching of literacy becomes fascinating when we begin with poetic sayings. This contributes to the harmony and sweetness of teaching.

Method of Teaching.

The Bhajan chart should be read a number of times by the teacher and each time the scholars in a body should be asked to say it after he goes through the Bhajan. He should punctuate the reading of the Bhajan in such a manner that as he goes through it, he appears to be scanning the words of the Bhajan. His voice should be gentle and clear.

After giving some acquaintance with the Bhajan chart, he should try to acquaint his scholars with the words comprising the Bhajan. To do this effectively word charts should be made to appear through the sliding machine in which the word makes a sudden appearance to the view and is also suddenly replaced by another. This method is commonly known as "Look and Say" method and the sliding machine which I have devised on the lines of the sliding frame of the magic lantern, would be found to be the most suitable for this purpose. Similarly, after giving a thorough visual acquaintance with words, the letters which are the

component parts of these words may be taken up for teaching by the same "Look and Say" method on the sliding machine. Writing should come last.

In Appendix D seven Matra charts are given and they may be taught at the time of revising the Bhajan charts one per day.

In Appendix E the Milawat charts are given, which should follow the Matra charts one per day. This is known as inductive method of teaching.

APPENDIX B

A representative Chart of the Nagpur Literacy Plan

कलम किसकी है
राम की कलम है
कलम काहे की है
सेठे की कलम है
किस लिये कलम है
कलम लिखने को है

क	ल	म
स	इ	क
क	म	ल
न	म	क
श	क	र
न	र	क

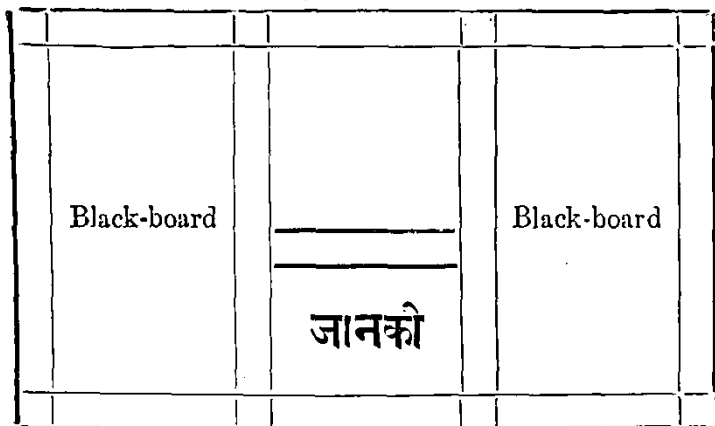
ल	व	ण
व	द	ल
ल	प	क
प	ल	ह
म	ह	ल
ल	र	क

म	र	र
स	म	र
म	र	द
क	र	म
म	र	ज
अ	म	र

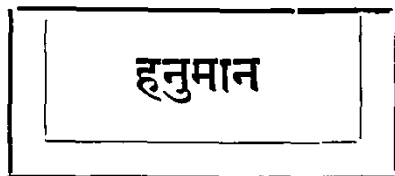
APPENDIX C

The Shantipur Plan

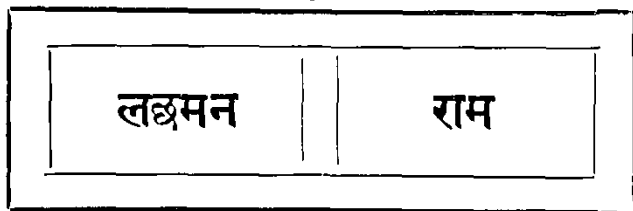
Plan of the sliding frame with a black-board



Slit for fixing word Chart



Sliding frame



चार्ट नं० १

Size 27" × 17"

राम लछमन जानकी ।
जय बोली हनुमान की ॥

चार्ट नं० २

Size 27" × 17"

रघु पति राघव राजा राम ।
पतित पावन सीता राम ॥

चार्ट नं० ३

Size 27" × 17"

राम नाम लड्डू, गोपाल नाम घी ।
कृष्ण नाम मिसरी घोर धार पी ॥

चार्ट नं० ४

Size 27" × 17"

श्रीकृष्ण गोविन्द हरे मुरारे ।
हे नाथ नारायण वासुदेव ॥

चार्ट नं० ५

Size 27" × 17"

गोविन्द गोविन्द हरे मुरारे ।
गोविन्द गोविन्द मुकुन्द कृष्ण ॥

चार्ट नं० ६

Size 27" × 17"

जय रघु नन्दन, जय सिय राम ।
गोपी बल्लभ राधे श्याम ।

चार्ट नं० ७

Size 27" × 17"

राम राम सब कोउ कहे,
दशरथ कहै न कोय ।
एक बेर दशरथ कहै,
कोटि यज्ञ फल होय ॥

चार्ट नं० ८

Size 27" × 17"

जो नहिँ जानत राम को,
ताहि न जानत राम ।
पड़ा रहे संसार में,
ज्यों चलनी को चाम ॥

चार्ट नं० ६

Size 27" × 17"

चित्रकूट के घाट पर,
भइ संतन की भीर ।
तुलसीदास चन्दन घिसैं,
तिलक देत रघुवीर ॥

चार्ट नं० १०

Size 27" × 17"

ढम ढमा ढम ब्याह गिलहरी का है
सुनिये आज ।
पोथी पत्रा लेकर चलिये
पांडे जी महाराज ॥

तुलसी बिरवा बाग में,
सीचे से कुमिलाय ।
राम भरोसे जे रहै,
परबत पर हरियाय ॥

जहाँ सुमति तँह सम्पति नाना ।
जहाँ कुमति तँह विपति निदाना ॥

(126)

चार्ट नं० १३

Size 27" × 17"

दूट चाप नहिं जुरहि रिसाने ।
बैठहु होइ है पाँय पिराने ॥

नं० १

द	द	दादा	दादी
स	ल	साला	साली
म	म	मामा	मामी
क	क	काका	काकी
न	न	नाना	नानी
		।	ी

लाठी “आ” की मात्रा बनती

पूछो कल्लू गोपी से ।

‘ई’ की मात्रा कैसे बनती

मिलकर लाठी टोपी से ॥

नं० २

म	र	मार	मोर	मौर
स	र	सार	सोर	सौर
ल	ट	लाट	लोट	लौट
च	क	चाक	चोक	चौक
ब	र	बार	बोर	बौर
		।	।	।

लाठी एक पंखा से मिलकर
 'ओ' का शब्द बनाती है
 दो पंखा से मिलकर लाठी
 'औ' की धुन उपजाती है

नं० ३

ब ल	बेल	बैल
द व	देव	दैव
स र	सेर	सैर
ब द	बेद	बैद
म ल	मेल	मैल

“ए” ध्वनि पंखा एक उठाती ।

“ऐ” ध्वनि पंखे दो डुलवाती ॥

नं० ४

द	ख	देख	देखा	देखो
ख	ल	खेल	खेला	खेलो
घ	र	घेर	घेरा	घेरो
ख	द	खेद	खेदा	खेदो
ठ	ल	ठेल	ठेला	ठेलो

‘ए’ का पंखा चीन्हो साथी ।

‘ओ’ की मात्रा पंखा लाठी ॥

नं० ५

मै

मौन

कै

कौन

बै र

बौर

पै दा

पौदा

पै न

पौना

‘ऐ’ देखो दो पंखे लाया ।

‘औ’ ने लाठी और लगाया ॥

नं० ६

न	ज	निज	निजी
स	र	सिर	सीर
द	न	दिन	दीन
म	ल	मिल	मिली
क	स	किस	किसी
		ि	ी

दोनो लाठी टोपी लावें
 पर आपस में भेद बतावें ।
 छुटकी बायें रहतो है
 बड़की दायें भुकती है ॥

नं० ७

स त

सुत

सूत

स न

सुन

सूना

द र

दुर

दूर

च न

चुन

चूना

ग र

गुर

गुरू

७

९

जब “उ” को मूँछें ऊपर जाती ।

तब “ऊ” अपनी स्वयं गिराती ॥

APPENDIX E

मिलावट चार्ट

नं० १

ग्वाला

ग्+वाला

ज्यादा

ज्+यादा

स्वाद

स्+वाद

श्याम

श्+याम

पल्थी

पल्+थी

लाठी वाले अक्षर मिलने
अगर किसी से जाते हैं ।
सबसे पहिले अपनी लाठी
जाकर कहीं छिपाते हैं ॥

नं० २

दफतर

दफ्+तर

क्यारी

क्+यारी

सुखू

सुक्+खू

मुपत

मुफ्+त

हुकम

हुक्+म

दुमदार अक्षरों से मिलावट

उनकी दुम कट जाती है ॥

नं० ३

पद्म

पट्+ठा

लङ्

लङ्+ङ्

द्वार

द्+वार

पद्म

पङ्+खा

टङ्

ट+टङ्

ऊटपटांग अक्षरों से मिलावट

ज्यों के त्यों मिल जाते हैं ॥

नं० ४

उर्द	उर्+द
मर्द	मर्+द
सुर्ख	सुर्+ख
मुर्ग	मुर्+ग
बर्फी	बर्+फी

‘र’ यदि पहिले आता है ।
तो सिर पर चढ़ जाता है ॥

नं० ५

प्राण

प्+राण

अद्रा

अद्+रा

उघ्र

उम्+र

बज्र

बज्+र

भ्रम

भ्+रम

‘र’ जब पीछे आवैगा ।

नोचे टांग अडावैगा ॥